United Nations A/64/PV.104

General Assembly

Sixty-fourth session

Official Records

104th plenary meeting
Friday, 2 July 2010, 3 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Ali Abdussalam Treki ..... (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya)

The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

Agenda item 114 (*continued*)

Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit

Draft resolution (A/64/L.56)

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): Members will recall that the General Assembly held the debate on agenda item 114, jointly with agenda items 48, 120 and 121, at the 47th plenary meeting on 16 November 2009. Members will also recall that under this item, jointly with agenda items 48 and 53 (b) and (f), the Assembly adopted decision 64/555 at its 82nd plenary meeting, on 15 April 2010, and resolution 64/265, at its 86th plenary meeting on 13 May 2010.

(*spoke in English*)

I should like to draw the Assembly's attention to the following corrections to draft resolution A/64/L.56.

Paragraph 14 should read as follows:

"Emphasizes the principle of national ownership and leadership, and supports the initiative of some countries to use, on a voluntary basis, common country programme documents, as well as its support for all countries that wish to continue using the existing frameworks and processes for country-level programming."

Paragraph 16 should read as follows:

"Invites those countries presenting a common country programme document on a voluntary basis to prepare it consistent with the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, where it exists, and to present in the common country programme the critical actions that will be taken to achieve the agreed results with available or indicative resources, as well as actions to ensure coherence of the assistance provided by the United Nations system at the country level, attaching, as an annex, a brief description of the agreed results and indicative resources of each of the relevant United Nations agencies."

Paragraph 49 should read as follows:

"Decides to establish, by the present resolution, as a composite entity, a United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, to be known as UN Women, by consolidating and transferring to the Entity the existing mandates and functions of the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, and the Division for the Advancement of Women of the Secretariat, as well as those of the United Nations Development Fund for Women and the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women, to function both as a secretariat and to carry out operational activities at the country level, to be operational by 1 January 2011."

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-506. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

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Please recycle

Paragraph 90 should read as follows:

"Decides to review the work of the Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women at its sixty-eighth session, and requests the Secretary-General to present a comprehensive report in that regard to the General Assembly at its sixty-eighth session."

(*spoke in Arabic*)

In connection with draft resolution A/64/L.56, I now give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Shaaban (Department of General Assembly and Conference Management): In connection with draft resolution A/64/L.56, entitled "System-wide coherence", on behalf of the Secretary-General and in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, I wish to place on record the following statement on financial implications.

Under the terms of operative paragraphs 76, 77 and 85 of the draft resolution, the General Assembly would request the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly for its approval during the main part of its sixty-fifth session a report containing a revised proposal for the use of regular budget resources approved for the biennium 2010-2011 for the normative support functions of the new entity, in accordance with all relevant United Nations rules and procedures, including a detailed organizational chart of the entity and options for administrative arrangements for the regular budget of the entity.

The draft resolution would also request the Secretary-General to appoint the Under-Secretary-General by the beginning of the sixty-fifth session in order to oversee the transitional arrangements of the entity before its operationalization, and decide that the position of the Under-Secretary-General would be funded from existing temporary assistance funds pending the submission of the report on the revised regular budget required to be submitted to the Assembly at its sixty-fifth session.

The draft resolution would further request the Under-Secretary-General to submit a report to the Executive Board, including the organizational chart referred to in paragraph 76, together with a revised draft strategic plan and proposal for the use of voluntary resources for the support budget for the biennium 2010-2011.

As requested in the draft resolution, the Secretary-General, in consultation with all United Nations entities concerned, would present, during the main part of the sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly, the revised proposals on the use of regular budget resources approved for the 2010-2011 biennium for the normative support functions of the new entity, including a detailed organizational chart of the entity and options for administrative arrangements for the regular budget of the entity.

In that connection, it is expected that the proposals presented by the Secretary-General would include the necessary programmatic changes and resource requirements needed for their implementation. Any programme budget implications would therefore be considered at the time that proposals are considered and subsequently endorsed by the General Assembly.

In accordance with the established practice, the proposals of the Secretary-General would also contain summary information on the voluntary — that is, extrabudgetary — resources of the new composite entity. In order to ensure the compatibility of this information, including a detailed organizational chart of the entity, with that requested to be submitted to the new Executive Board, the Secretary-General would rely in that regard on the results of transitional arrangements.

Accordingly, should the General Assembly adopt the draft resolution, details on the programmatic changes and resource requirements in the biennium 2010-2011 would be provided by the Secretary-General to the General Assembly during the main part of its sixty-fifth session in the context of the report on the revised proposal for the use of regular budget resources for the 2010-2011 biennium that is requested in the current draft resolution.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/64/L.56, entitled "System-wide coherence", as orally corrected.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/64/L.56, as orally corrected?

Draft resolution A/64/L.56, as orally corrected, was adopted (resolution 64/289).

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): We have just adopted a resolution on system-wide coherence. The strength of the United Nations is reflected in the goodwill and commitment of its Members. The

resolution we have just adopted illustrates the dedication and joint efforts of Member States and the Secretariat to move forward together with a stronger and more efficient Organization.

The Organization's shortcomings are well known. Its operational activities are fragmented, costly and, at times, duplicative. Improving the coherence and effectiveness of the United Nations in delivering its services is vital to ensuring that the Organization remains at the heart of the global multilateral system.

Today is an important day for all of us. System-wide coherence has been a central theme of the General Assembly's agenda for the reform of the Organization since the 2005 World Summit. Since the beginning of my presidency, it has been my priority to facilitate the finalization of an agreement on the establishment of the new gender entity, as well as on other aspects of system-wide coherence, by June of this year.

I am therefore very pleased that today we have adopted a resolution that will enhance the performance of United Nations operational activities by making their funding system more coherent and by harmonizing their governance structure. For instance, the resolution requests that United Nations agencies that administer multi-donor trust funds report annually on their administration so as to ensure better complementarity between funds. Reforms to the governance structure of the Organization's operational activities also include establishing informal coordination meetings with their governing bodies to increase the coordination of their work and the circulation of information on the agendas, calendars and programmes of work of the governing bodies of United Nations operational activities with a view to enhancing the coherence of both agenda-setting and programmes of work.

The resolution also seeks to institutionalize our joint efforts to empower one of the world's greatest assets, namely, women. I am delighted that the resolution establishes UN Women, a United Nations entity for gender equality and the empowerment of women. UN Women will consolidate and take up all the existing mandates and functions of the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, the Division for the Advancement of Women, the United Nations Development Fund for Women and the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women.

The entity will be both a normative and an operational body, acting as a secretariat and carrying out operational activities such as guidance and technical support at the country level. Importantly, the resolution also charges UN Women with the additional mandate of coordinating the United Nations system on gender issues, including gender mainstreaming. The United Nations is uniquely placed to take a leading role in advancing the status of women. I have no doubt of the significance of this resolution in making progress in that vital area.

A strong organizational structure will undoubtedly better serve us in improving our work, particularly when it comes to results on the ground. But our work does not stop there. Excelling in our efforts to provide aid and development, secure global peace and protect the rights of the world's most vulnerable people requires constant reflection and continuous institutional improvement. Today, we have taken a major step to that end.

I would like to thank the co-facilitators, Her Excellency Mrs. Tiina Intelmann, Permanent Representative of Estonia, and His Excellency Mr. Ghazi Jomaa, Permanent Representative of Tunisia, for their great efforts during this process. Let me also thank His Excellency Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and Deputy Secretary-General Asha-Rose Migiro for their important work in supporting these reform efforts.

I now give the floor to Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon.

The Secretary-General: Allow me to warmly congratulate Member States, which today have adopted a landmark resolution on system-wide coherence and established UN Women, a new composite United Nations entity for gender equality and the empowerment of women. This is truly a watershed day.

By bringing together four parts of the United Nations system dedicated to women's issues, Member States have created a much stronger voice for women and for gender equality at the global level. It will now be much more difficult for the world to ignore the challenges facing women and girls, or to fail to take the necessary action

Member States have combined global norm-setting responsibilities in one United Nations entity and given it the means to provide operational support to countries to implement those norms and standards. The United Nations system will now be able to significantly step up its support for national efforts to advance gender equality and women's empowerment.

I thank you, Mr. President, for your leadership. I also wish to thank co-facilitators Ambassador Tiina Intelmann of Estonia and Ambassador Ghazi Jomaa of Tunisia for the successful outcome of their important consultations. I am sure that all Member States will agree that the consultations on system-wide coherence were conducted in the most inclusive, transparent and efficient manner. Let us give credit where credit is due. Ambassador Intelmann and Ambassador Jomaa and their excellent staff have shown exemplary leadership and dedication to this demanding task. I would like to place on record our sincere appreciation.

I am also grateful to Member States and to Permanent Representatives for having taken this major step forward for the world's women and girls. I know that their negotiations on certain issues have been difficult. I greatly appreciate their spirit of compromise and I pay tribute to the great efforts of all Permanent Representatives and their experts, who have been so engaged in this process.

I also wish to thank Ambassador Hardeep Singh Puri of India for his able facilitation of the meetings of ambassadors at the last stages of the process, where some critical issues relating to the gender entity were resolved. And I am sure all members will join me in expressing our gratitude to the previous co-facilitators of earlier rounds of General Assembly consultations on system-wide coherence, who laid the ground for this landmark resolution.

I would also like to recognize the support and encouragement that all delegations received from civil society organizations. Their determination sustained the necessary momentum to establish this long-overdue outcome.

Finally but importantly, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the wonderful staff of the Division for the Advancement of Women, the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women, the Office of the Special Adviser of the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, and the United Nations Development Fund for Women for their great efforts on women's issues and their work in preparing for the establishment of the new gender entity.

The strength of the United Nations lies both in its intergovernmental agreements and in the wonderful women and men who work for our goals and values around the world. We have seen much collaborative spirit among the staff of the four entities in recent months. We will depend on that as they now embark on the task of making UN Women operational. We will work to ensure that the transition is as smooth as possible, while the staff of the four existing entities continue to perform their usual functions.

As the Assembly is aware, the new resolution establishes the post of an Under-Secretary-General to head the new entity. I am working to identify the most suitable candidate. Until the post is filled, I have asked Deputy Secretary-General Asha-Rose Migiro to guide the transition process. I would like to take this opportunity to thank her for her leadership of the process that has brought us so far.

This resolution will always be strongly associated with the establishment of the new gender entity, but we should not forget that Member States have also adopted today many important decisions in other areas of the system-wide coherence process. In the area of funding, Member States have agreed to introduce a new approach to determining the critical mass of core funding for funds and programmes. Rather than relying on ad hoc bilateral negotiations to address resource requirements, better links will be established between core contributions and the cost of carrying out key mandates. I believe that the critical-mass approach to funding offers a new and powerful vision for improving the quantity and quality of funding for operational activities.

Member States have also realized that the voice of programme countries is not always heard in governing bodies. The resolution addresses that critical issue by requesting governing bodies to identify how to strengthen the participation of national policymakers in meetings of the executive boards of funds and programmes and the operational activities segment of the Economic and Social Council. Such measures will enable programme countries, particularly the least developed, to participate in governing bodies on a more equal basis.

The adoption of this resolution on system-wide coherence sends a strong signal that Member States are determined to make the work of the United Nations system for development more coherent, effective and efficient. The Assembly has taken a bold decision to make the United Nations much better able to support progress for women and men. I encourage the Assembly to ensure that the new gender entity is well funded so that it can deliver. I am aware that many Member States face resource constraints due to the recent economic and financial crisis. But I am confident that UN Women will receive strong financial backing from donor countries and other partners.

The newest member of the United Nations family has been born today. The Assembly's generous support is essential for it to grow up to be the champion for gender equality and the empowerment of women we need.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): Before giving the floor to speakers in explanation of position following the adoption of the resolution, may I remind delegations that explanations are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mrs. Khattab (Egypt): It is my great honour and privilege to address the General Assembly on behalf of the 135 States members of the Joint Coordinating Committee (JCC) of the Group of 77 and China and the Non-Aligned Movement on this historic day, when the international community has declared its resolve to ensure that women, who represent more than half of the world's population, enjoy their full rights.

The adoption of resolution 64/289, entitled "System-wide coherence", illustrates the resolve of Member States to invest in one of its most precious resources — women. The establishment of UN Women is the crowning achievement of a five-year process of negotiation in which we strived to honour our collective commitments as articulated in the World Summit Outcome document (resolution 60/1). In that regard, I would like to underline the following with respect to the different clusters.

First, on the newly established entity for gender equality and the empowerment of women, the adoption of this resolution is a huge step in the long process of United Nations reform and one of the most exciting achievements of the past 10 years. Today, following years of tough and prolonged negotiations, we are witnessing the establishment of a new entity that belongs to all the women of the world and that will be headed by a woman, in the best interests of all women.

Mandated by the women of 135 countries, under the leadership of Egypt and Yemen, the JCC actively engaged in a series of long and constructive negotiations with open minds and hearts and a spirit of flexibility, tolerance and understanding. We were determined to achieve our goal, and together we did so. Today is a key milestone in our collective efforts.

Today, we established UN Women for our women and for all women — a strong, universal entity within the United Nations system, determined to help women achieve their dreams and address their challenges and to commit all stakeholders, Governments, civil society, private sector and the entire international community to come together to solidify their efforts towards the advancement and empowerment of all women so that they might fully and equally enjoy their rights without any discrimination. UN Women puts women at the forefront of the international agenda, pledges its support to strengthen national capacities towards the advancement of their status, and is committed to the fulfilment of their rights to develop, lead and prosper.

Realizing that we needed a more proactive approach to bring about a significant change as early as March 2010, the JCC was proud to be the first among all negotiating partners to submit a detailed, concrete and comprehensive set of elements dealing with all aspects of establishing the entity. Our intention was to institutionalize such concepts as universality, national ownership and equitable geographical representation, which are among the cardinal principles of the United Nations, in the creation of the new entity. The highlight of all of these proposals was the proposal to establish a new Executive Board that would be strong, independent and appropriately and adequately mandated and funded, and, most importantly, that would abide by the equitable geographical distribution of the General Assembly in the distribution of its seats.

In a major step forward, the JCC was not oblivious to the contemporary realities of today's world and recognized also the role of the contributing countries. The JCC was willing to give contributors their due role and responsibilities in the new Executive Board. I am confident that the contributing States will provide adequate core funding to the entity in order to empower it beyond being a mere catalyst, so that it might emerge rather as a key international body for

women, a strong voice, an advocate and a programme-implementing entity of the United Nations in the field. This has been demanded by civil society in general, and women's organizations in particular, and I am happy that we were able to acknowledge this fact in the resolution.

The entity will be relevant and truly universal only if its activities successfully provide support and assistance to all women of the world, in developing and developed countries; women from all regions and corners of the world, including those suffering in armed conflicts and under foreign occupation. This is a core concern of the JCC.

We look forward to the establishment of a focal point within the entity for assisting women living under foreign occupation. Moreover, we will be supportive of the new Under-Secretary-General in establishing appropriate mechanisms to address all 12 critical areas of concern, as identified in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action 15 years ago. Critical areas deserve due attention and require that focus not be diverted to issues that are important to only a few while ignoring other important issues that concern all of us.

As we turn an important page in the cause of women's rights, we are eager and hopeful that the Executive Board will be able to devise innovative mechanisms to implement the mandate in developed countries and in other areas that do not have a United Nations field presence. This was one of the JCC's reasons for suggesting the entity be called "UN Women", that is, a United Nations for women or nations uniting for women.

In order to ensure continuity of the work of the new Executive Board and enhance institutional memory, it is our understanding that the Economic and Social Council will follow its established practice of applying a staggered mechanism in electing members of the Board during the first election, thus guaranteeing a smooth transition and the institutional stability of its work.

Accountability and oversight are as important for the entity as for any other part of the Secretariat. We request the Secretary-General to put in place a proper accountability framework based on the guidelines recently defined in resolution 64/259. It is important that these concepts be set in stone and duly institutionalized in the operational philosophy of the new entity from the very beginning of its existence. Accountability — accountability of the entity to Member States and accountability of Member States to their women — is of crucial importance to the JCC.

On behalf of the JCC, I would like to seize this opportunity to express our deep appreciation for the excellent work and most fruitful programmes being carried in the field by the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW). We stress in particular the importance of ensuring the continuation of all current operational activities, field offices, staff and facilities, as well as existing and new country programmes and contractual obligations until appropriate new arrangements are put in place. With this in mind, we request the Secretary-General to ensure that all personnel matters related to the transition be addressed in a sensitive manner and dealt with efficiently and with due respect for the existing staff rules and regulations of the United Nations in such cases, both at Headquarters and in the field.

To the JCC, dissolving the two entities and transferring their mandates and functions to the new entity does not mean that we will establish the entity without the expertise of the current organs and staff, whose efforts are highly appreciated and essential to the success of the new entity. The JCC looks forward to a smooth transition without programme interruption or staff suffering from the change.

We hope that all the existing activities of the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women (OSAGI) and the Division for the Advancement of Women will also be continued till new arrangements are put in place. After all, UNIFEM, the Division, INSTRAW and OSAGI are the building blocks of this new entity, and they will be our assets during the transition period and when the entity is operationalized on 1 January 2011.

The JCC looks forward to the new entity commencing its activities as soon as possible, which will strengthen the United Nations ability to support Member States in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women. In addition, we look forward to the early appointment of the new Under-Secretary-General at the head of the entity, who we understand will be a woman from the South. We hope that her leadership capabilities and clear vision will provide

added value to the full implementation of the mandate given by the resolution we have just adopted. We also hope that the staff who are recruited in the entity will represent all the regions of the world in an equitable manner in order to empower the entity with a solid understanding of different cultural sensitivities.

We also recognize that there is still work to be done by the Fifth Committee regarding funding, budget and resources, as well as the organizational chart of the entity, and we look forward to the Committee convening soon to deal with these issues.

Secondly, on governance, the system-wide evaluation mechanism, common country programmes, "delivering as one", the funding of operational activities for development and the harmonization of business practices, the JCC welcomes the progress made through this resolution in the areas of governance and funding of operational activities.

In that context, the JCC attaches great importance to the full implementation of the resolution's provisions aimed at enhancing the coherence of the work of the United Nations development system and the transparency of the activities of the Chief Executives Board for Coordination. Furthermore, the JCC would like to stress what the Assembly has emphasized with regard to the principles of national ownership and leadership and United Nations support to all country programmes.

The impact of the international economic and financial crisis and other crises, which have hampered the efforts of developing countries towards achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, makes United Nations operational activities more important than ever. As they also support the efforts of country programmes to address the devastating repercussions of those multiple crises, the JCC has stressed from the outset the importance of improving funding for United Nations operational activities in order to ensure their adequacy, predictability and sustainability.

In that context, while acknowledging the increase in overall funding for United Nations operational activities, the JCC strongly supports the resolution's emphasis on the need for adequate quality and quantity of funding for operational activities and the clear mandate stipulated in the resolution for the governing bodies of funds, programmes and relevant specialized agencies to explore the definition and arrive at a critical mass of core resources. The JCC looks forward to their reports on this matter and considers it an important step towards ensuring the balance between core and non-core funding.

Finally, the JCC would like to express its sincere appreciation to you personally, Mr. President, for your leadership and commitment to the cause of United Nations reform and the empowerment of women. We also thank His Excellency Vice-President Ambassador Hardeep Singh Puri, Permanent Representative of India, for the great work he has done in steering our consultations on some of the most difficult issues during the past few days and for his ability to bring about different compromises and creative forms of agreement.

Our appreciation also goes to the co-facilitators of the process, Her Excellency Mrs. Tiina Intelmann, Permanent Representative of Estonia, and His Excellency Mr. Ghazi Jomaa, Permanent Representative of Tunisia, for their dedication and effective management of the consultation process. I would also like to make special mention of our appreciation of our partners in development for the constructive atmosphere that has prevailed throughout the negotiating process.

Our thanks also go to Deputy Secretary-General Asha-Rose Migiro, her team and that of the Secretary-General, and everyone in the Secretariat who helped and supported Member States by facilitating our agreement today. We thank them very much. Their services and support are always appreciated.

Last but not least, I would like to thank His Excellency Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for his tireless efforts, the least of which was his full support for the JCC proposal that the new baby must have a name, a simple yet expressive one that epitomizes what the new entity is all about. We believe that UN Women says it all.

(*spoke in Arabic*)

Having spoken on behalf of the JCC of the Group of 77 and China and the Non-Aligned Movement, it is now my pleasure to address the Assembly briefly in my national capacity and on behalf of all Egyptian and Arab women, underlining the priority that Egypt and the Arab world attach to women's full enjoyment of all human rights without distinction. That remains one of the goals of the Arab Women's Organization, which

was established upon the initiative of Mrs. Suzanne Mubarak, First Lady of Egypt. This initiative was supported and strengthened by the first ladies of every Arab States, as was the initiative of convening two NAM summits for first ladies, a precedent that stressed the importance that Egypt and NAM member States attach to gender equality, the empowerment of women, the full enjoyment by women of all their human rights without distinction and their advancement in all areas, whether political, economic or social.

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the United Nations on the establishment of this new entity for women, as well as all Member States, both developing and developed, that participated in negotiating its establishment. I am honoured that my country was one of the Member States that actively and effectively participated in those successful efforts. The Government of Egypt pledges to extend its full support to the new entity in order to help it to achieve its goals.

We welcome the great achievement of strengthening United Nations work in all issues related to women, and we all pledge to work together for its success. The success of the entity in fulfilling its mandate will require comprehensive coordination by all United Nations agencies and organs, cooperation with all treaty bodies, especially the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and the Committee on the Rights of the Child, and assistance to committees aimed at coordinating their efforts and supporting Member States from both developing and developed countries, as well as all regional and subregional organizations and political communities. In that regard, Egypt pledges to continue its determined efforts, both nationally and regionally, with the Arab region and with NAM countries, in coordination with Yemen as the current Chair of the Group of 77 and China.

Let us all resolve to eradicate all forms of discrimination and marginalization against women and to help make the most of their capabilities and capacities to the benefit of all humankind. Together, God willing, we will meet the expectations of women around the world.

Mrs. Kaur (India): It is my privilege to address the General Assembly as we adopt today the landmark resolution 64/289 creating UN Women, a composite entity for gender equality and the empowerment of women within the United Nations. I congratulate you, Mr. President, on your leadership in this transformational reform at the United Nations.

I say this with particular pride, as India has the distinction of giving the General Assembly its first woman President, Mrs. Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit. I am of course happy that my delegation, under the leadership of Mr. Hardeep Singh Puri, played a very active role in the success of the negotiations. I offer my congratulations also to the co-facilitators, the Secretary-General, the Deputy Secretary-General and all others involved in the process.

India is home to more than half a billion women. Our Constitution enshrines gender equality and affirmative action to ensure women's empowerment. That has been a key focus of our socio-economic policies. Prime Minister Manmohan Singh has said, "no society can claim to be a part of the modern civilized world unless it treats its women on par with men".

India has also taken major strides in the area of the political empowerment of women. Today, more than 1 million elected women representatives participate in political decision-making at the grassroots level. A move to provide a similar reservation of seats for women in the Indian Parliament is at an advanced stage of the legislative process, already having received the approval of the upper house of our Parliament.

India welcomes the creation of UN Women as a significant victory for the cause of women worldwide. It is a reflection of our collective commitment to the pursuit of gender equality and empowerment. Our decision here today also takes a step towards restoring the faith of those Member States, including mine, that often regard the United Nations as an anachronistic body resistant to organizational reform and innovation. We of course hope that it creates momentum for much needed reform in other areas as well.

I would like to take this opportunity to pledge India's full support to UN Women. We urge the early operationalization of the entity so that the international community can work with renewed vigour and commitment for gender equality and women's empowerment.

In conclusion, I would like to recall the words of Sonia Gandhi, Chairperson of the United Progressive

Alliance and the leader of my party: "Complete gender equality, nothing less, must be our over-riding goal. There must be neither compromise nor complacency. The struggle is joined. It must be brought to full fruition."

Mr. Grauls (Belgium): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The candidate countries of Turkey, Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the countries of the Stabilization and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia, as well as the Republic of Moldova, Armenia, Ukraine, Georgia and Iceland, align themselves with this statement.

On behalf of the European Union, I want to thank the two co-facilitators, my colleagues Ambassador Jomaa of Tunisia and Ambassador Intelmann of Estonia, for their tireless efforts in bringing Member States to this consensus decision on the establishment of a new gender entity and for bringing about progress in other important areas within the system-wide coherence process.

I would also like to thank you personally, Mr. President, and the Secretary-General for the commitment and leadership you have shown in this negotiation. I also wish to thank my colleague Ambassador Puri, Permanent Representative of India, for the crucial role he played in very ably steering the consultations of the past few days that led to this result. Our gratitude also goes to the Deputy Secretary-General and all others involved in this process.

The European Union welcomes the unanimous adoption of resolution 64/289 on system-wide coherence, and in particular the establishment of UN Women, the United Nations entity for gender equality and the empowerment of women, which is to be operational by 1 January 2011. After four years of negotiations, the merger of several bodies into one, new strengthened gender entity is a new milestone in the reform of the United Nations. It demonstrates the willingness of the membership for reform. The European Union encourages the United Nations system to carry on in that direction.

From an early stage in this process, the European Union strongly supported the creation of a composite entity in order to strengthen the capacity, accountability and effectiveness of the United Nations system in the area of gender equality. The entity will be in a position to close the current gap between the normative and operative work of the United Nations in this area, promote effective system-wide mainstreaming in the United Nations system and strengthen accountability. Through this new body, the United Nations will be in a stronger position to meet the urgent and ever-increasing requests by Governments in support for gender equality and the empowerment of women.

With regard to the governing body of the operational activities of the new entity, the European Union still believes that an independent segment of the United Nations Development Programme or the United Nations Population Fund would have been most appropriate for ensuring efficiency and coherence. However, in the spirit of compromise and flexibility, we have accepted the establishment of a new executive board. Smooth efficient functioning by the board and strong performance by the entity will ensure the level of funding required for its operational activities, to which the European Union and its member States remain fully committed.

Strong leadership will be essential in order to implement the provisions of the resolution unanimously adopted today. Therefore, the European Union calls on the Secretary-General to urgently advance the appointment of the new Under-Secretary-General of UN Women so that she or he will be in a position to lead the development of the new entity from the early stages.

In the next few months, the four entities will come together under the leadership of the future Under-Secretary-General. During the transition period, it will be particularly important to ensure that all activities currently carried out by the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) can continue and that the dissolution of UNIFEM as a separate entity does not translate into any disruption in the field or at Headquarters.

The European Union wants to recognize the essential contribution of civil society throughout the negotiations for the new gender entity. The resolution before us underlines the vital role of civil society organizations in all its future work. The new Under-Secretary-General will have the important task of ensuring that effective means are established for ensuring meaningful consultations with civil society organizations at all levels.

With regard to other areas of the system-wide coherence process, the European Union welcomes the progress made so far in the areas of the funding and governance of operational activities for development. The final purpose of the reform in all these areas should be to strengthen the capacity of the United Nations to deliver better assistance for poor and vulnerable people according to their needs and priorities.

In particular, the European Union warmly welcomes the support that the General Assembly gives to the initiative of some countries to use common country programmes on a voluntary basis, thus responding to the needs and demands emerging at the country level. In addition, the General Assembly welcomes the ongoing process in the Delivering as One pilot initiative, as recently recognized in the Hanoi intergovernmental meeting and in Kigali. The European Union is encouraged by that positive trend and looks forward to a swift start to the independent evaluation of that experience, as mandated of the Secretary-General in previous General Assembly resolutions.

The European Union believes that during this process we have developed an improved understanding of the implications of various forms of funding. We need to continue to build on that and to improve the funding architecture of United Nations operational activities for development, in order to make it more effective, transparent and accessible and more in line with the national priorities of developing countries. While we explore new ideas and concepts, we must reiterate that it is increased coherence, efficiency, transparency and accountability in the management and delivery of United Nations development cooperation that in the end will translate into the increased quantity and quality of funding flows.

The European Union will continue to work actively in all those crucial areas of United Nations efforts in future sessions of the General Assembly and in all relevant forums.

Mr. Quinlan (Australia): I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of Australia, Canada and New Zealand.

Canada, Australia and New Zealand appreciate the leadership and support of the Secretary-General and of the Deputy Secretary-General and her team throughout the journey to achieve this resolution. Of course, we also appreciate the efforts of agencies, Member States and civil society partners. We particularly thank and congratulate the co-facilitators, Ambassador Intelmann and Ambassador Jomaa, for their significant work in fostering consensus. We would also like to express our appreciation to you, Mr. President, and especially to Vice-President Ambassador Puri for the leadership necessary to delivering the final agreement. Of course, as the Secretary-General has noted, we should not forget the vital contribution made by co-facilitators from previous sessions — including, over the past two years, our colleagues from Spain, Namibia, Ireland and Tanzania, as well as by previous General Assembly Presidents, especially Miguel d'Escoto Brockmann during the sixty-third session.

Coming to a consensus has obviously been a challenge. We all know that, and the collective efforts of many have brought us to the adoption of today's outcome. As a result, however, the resolution strongly demonstrates the commitment of Member States to United Nations operational activities and the will to make progress on reform efforts, ensuring a stronger and more effective role for the Organization in the area of development.

Canada, Australia and New Zealand are fully committed to working with all partners to strengthen the United Nations development system so that it can respond more effectively to the needs and requests of programme countries. It is our hope that key proposals in the governance section of the resolution will help to achieve more informed, responsive and committed decision-making from the relevant intergovernmental bodies. The relevance of the operational work of the United Nations to today's development challenges vitally depends on that.

We look forward to the results of the independent evaluation of the Delivering as One pilot initiative during the sixty-sixth session of the General Assembly so that we can collectively improve our understanding and, in turn, our support to those countries. We look forward to seeing that evaluation carried out in line with the highest standards of independence and professionalism, and with United Nations norms and standards for evaluation.

Canada, Australia and New Zealand are obviously particularly pleased that the Assembly has acted decisively to establish and operationalize the United Nations entity for gender equality and the

empowerment of women. This is a key, historic milestone that we have been working towards for a long time — since the Beijing Declaration — and it is important that we have achieved this in the lead-up to September's Millennium Development Goals summit.

UN Women will strengthen the voice and action of the United Nations on gender equality and women's empowerment. It will also strengthen United Nations operational support to Member States for the effective delivery of our collective commitments, including the promotion and protection of women's rights under national ownership and national leadership.

We all know that the empowerment of women is an indispensable element in eliminating poverty. As we have heard this week repeatedly in the Development Cooperation Forum, empowering women legally, financially and through education has significant positive impact on the whole community, including healthier and better-educated children, more responsive governance, improved agricultural productivity and improved newborn and maternal health.

Strong leadership of the new entity will have an enormous impact globally, not just on women but on girls and boys, women and men. We must not lose momentum in following through decisively on this resolution. We would ask the Secretary-General to accelerate the recruitment for the head of UN Women through an open and transparent process, and we urge Member States to submit their best candidates quickly to the Secretary-General.

We urge all Member States to lend their full support to UN Women to ensure a smooth transition period over the coming months, including through the new executive board. We look forward to a strong, strategic and technically skilled executive board to support UN Women through the transition and beyond in its full operations.

In conclusion, UN Women can certainly count on Australia, Canada and New Zealand for strong support over the coming years.

Mrs. Intelmann (Estonia): The process of negotiation that has taken several years and a lot of dedication on the part of many has reached an outcome this afternoon. It was a privilege to be closely involved in the final stretch and to build on the outstanding results achieved by the previous co-facilitators on system-wide coherence.

Estonia hopes that the implementation of resolution 64/289 will improve the response of the United Nations development system to countries' needs. We also hope that the creation of UN Women will ensure greater coherence, help to overcome previous fragmentation and create a strong advocate for gender equality and the empowerment of women.

During the negotiations we witnessed the active engagement of all Member States, for which we would like to thank them sincerely and acknowledge that without their flexibility and results-oriented mindset we would not have reached a successful conclusion. My sincere thanks go to the Secretary-General, the Deputy Secretary-General, the Office of the Deputy Secretary-General and the entire Secretariat for their support and valuable help. I would like to convey special thanks to the President of the General Assembly and his Office and to the Vice-Presidents for their engagement, support and leadership. Once more, I would like to express my gratitude for and highlight the outstanding work done by the Chairs of working groups and all other delegations that have facilitated our work and helped us on the way to reaching consensus.

Mr. Jomaa (Tunisia) (*spoke in Arabic*): It is a pleasure to address the Assembly today and to offer my congratulations on its adoption of resolution 64/289, on system-wide coherence. This is a historic occasion and a milestone in the work of the Organization and its efforts to develop its working methods and adopt reform measures that respond to the needs and expectations of Member States and of every country of the world in order to elevate our Organization to the heights we all expect.

I would like to highlight the importance of this occasion and to acknowledge the participation of all of those who have contributed to this achievement. I shall therefore try to use all the official languages of the United Nations I can in expressing my gratitude. I apologize for not having mastered all of them.

I would like to express my appreciation for the great support of the President of the General Assembly, Mr. Ali Abdussalam Treki, during the negotiations on the resolution. I thank him for his continued readiness to provide support and encouragement during the negotiations to achieve the results we have attained. I also wish to thank the members of his staff and the

Director of his Office, who provided us the necessary facilities to further the negotiations.

(*spoke in English*)

I would also like to seize this historic opportunity to extend my warmest thanks and appreciation to His Excellency Mr. Ban Ki-moon for his personal commitment, especially to the reform process and generally for his tireless efforts to improve the working methods of the Organization and enhance its effectiveness and efficiency in all areas and at all levels. At the same time, I extend my warmest thanks to Ms. Asha-Rose Migiro, Deputy Secretary-General, who has accompanied us in this process with a clear perspective and provided all the help we requested from her.

I cannot neglect to deeply and sincerely thank all Member States, ambassadors, experts and advisors. In particular, I would like to thank Ambassador Puri of India for his incredibly committed, steadfast and hard work, during which he put in late nights to enable us to achieve this historic result.

I also wish to express my deep gratitude to the members of the Secretariat, the men and women who work in various United Nations agencies and organs and several United Nations departments, who advised us and provided us, generously and in a timely manner, with the necessary information and needed clarification when pessimism and doubt sometimes overtook the process. I would honestly like to name them one by one. In the interest of time, however, Ambassador Intelmann and I would like to thank them all collectively.

Without sincere and transparent cooperation between Member States and regional groups, including their willingness to get things done and reach tangible results, this process would not have been successful. I therefore thank the Ambassadors of Yemen and Egypt as co-Chairs of the Joint Coordinating Committee of the Group of 77 and the Non-Aligned Movement, the Ambassador of Spain as acting head of the delegation of the European Union, the United States, Russia, China, Japan, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and, in fact, all Member States without exception.

(*spoke in French*)

Among other things, resolution 64/289 provides us with an entity on gender equality that will allow us to make a difference with regard to all aspects of women's programmes. An entity of this scope will add a new dimension to the work of the United Nations. Our efforts henceforth should focus on practical aspects of establishing the entity and implementing its ambitious agenda.

My country, which has conferred privileged status on women and a valued role as active and fully participating partners, welcomes this result that brings credit to us all. Tunisia, through its leadership and based on its cutting edge initiatives in this area and its extensive experience, will always fully support and faithfully and actively contribute to supporting those issues in its strategic choices.

With this resolution, governance of the operational activities for development of the United Nations will take place in an institutional and legal framework that will be more harmonized, and therefore more effective. We thus hope to have positive results in the very near future.

(*spoke in Spanish*)

I would like to conclude by emphasizing that the United Nations has demonstrated that, with the sincere will of its Member States, the Secretariat and all of its partners, reform is possible and that improving the services of the Organization is our priority in order to respond to the national needs of Members and all social segments.

This exercise, which we are concluding today with great success, is the best illustration of that fact. Despite our differences, we as Member States have together sent a clear message to the entire world that we are capable of reconciling our differences, make mutual concessions and establish as our absolute priority the common interests of our peoples and of the Organization.

Mr. Barton (United States of America): The United States welcomes the adoption of this landmark resolution creating UN Women — a new, consolidated agency that will give one powerful voice to United Nations efforts to strengthen gender equality and empower women around the world.

Resolution 64/289 is the product of years of effort and months of intensive negotiations on the final details. It shows what we can accomplish when we transcend traditional differences and work across boundaries towards a common purpose. Let me express our deep appreciation for the skill and dedication of the

two co-facilitators — the Permanent Representatives of Estonia and Tunisia — and for the guidance that you, Mr. President, and your designated representative, the Permanent Representative of India, provided in the crucial final stages of the negotiations.

Our efforts have also built on groundwork laid by co-facilitators from the sixty-first, sixty-second and sixty-third sessions of the General Assembly. They also benefited from the personal commitment of Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and Deputy Secretary-General Migiro. We thank them along with all of the experts who laboured so hard to create this new body.

Let us be clear as to why this agency is so needed. So many women and girls around the world face daunting challenges — some common to all women, some particular to their own unique circumstances. So many women and girls will have high expectations for this vital new agency. The United States looks forward to working with UN Women, which has an impressive mandate to deal with the full range of issues that affect women's lives — from women's rights to women's economic empowerment; from women, peace and security to women's political participation — to ensure that these high expectations are realized.

This new agency must be a catalyst within the United Nations system, ensuring that United Nations funds and programmes and the Secretariat fully address the issues within their mandates that affect women and girls. We also expect UN Women to undertake new activities on the ground to support women in areas that have not yet been fully addressed by the United Nations system.

To play that challenging and ambitious role, UN Women will need a dynamic, strong and innovative leader who will bring fresh perspective, great energy and extensive skill to United Nations efforts to improve the lives of women in the twenty-first century. We urge the Secretary-General to appoint such a leader before the start of the next session of the General Assembly in September, as mandated by the resolution we have just adopted.

While we have naturally focused today on the establishment of UN Women, we should also take note of the significant progress that this resolution represents in other areas of the system-wide coherence agenda. The resolution recognizes the importance of improving the system for funding operational activities and expanding the donor base. It also highlights the need to improve executive board oversight by making it easier for national policymakers from developing countries to participate. The United States will continue to work with our partners on those issues as they arise.

The creation of this important new agency has been a collaborative effort involving many actors over many years, but, in a sense, our work has just begun. Now that this entity is a reality rather than an aspiration, we will all be put to the test. Now we must demonstrate our collective commitment to making UN Women a success and to improving the lives of women and girls around the world.

Mr. Gasana (Rwanda): At the outset, allow me to congratulate the two co-facilitators, the Permanent Representatives of Estonia and Tunisia, and their respective delegations for their patience and able stewardship of the process that has led to the adoption of resolution 64/289. Let me also extend our appreciation to the Secretary-General, the Deputy Secretary-General and their staff for their commitment to this process. Finally, I would like to congratulate you, Mr. President, and your able Vice-President, the Permanent Representative of India, for urging on us throughout the process.

We warmly welcome the adoption of resolution 64/289 on system-wide coherence. Our deliberations and negotiations at the United Nations can at times appear tedious, thankless and of minimal transformative effect. That is not the case today. This is indeed a pivotal moment in the reform of the United Nations.

The establishment of a United Nations entity for gender equality and the empowerment of women is of critical importance, as it brings together for the first time the organizational structures, high-level leadership and resources necessary to enable Governments and the United Nations system to significantly increase their efforts to fulfil their promises on gender equality, women's empowerment and women's human rights.

For Rwanda, which has emerged as a global leader in the fight for gender equality and has the highest percentage of women parliamentarians in the world and a continuous commitment to promoting, accelerating and sustaining gender equality, UN Women offers us the opportunity to augment our

achievements. We expect UN Women to bring the necessary leadership to shape and implement the policies needed to empower women, advance equality in a meaningful way and to hold us accountable to the goals and aspirations we set for ourselves. We look forward to the appointment of a strong Under-Secretary-General to give the entity the leadership it deserves. My Government stands ready to support the entity in every way possible.

The outcome document of the intergovernmental meeting of the programme country pilots on "delivering as one", held in Kigali in 2009, stated that the "delivering as one" approach had provided benefits for achieving better development results through increased national leadership and ownership in the development partnership with the United Nations system. It also stated that there was no going back to doing business in the manner in place prior to the "delivering as one" initiative.

The programme country pilots, of which Rwanda is one, had the opportunity to present their country-led evaluations in Hanoi a few weeks ago. They all showed that implementing the "delivering as one" approach had brought about valuable opportunities to further strengthen the relevance, currency and comparative advantages of the United Nations system in direct support of the priorities and interests of programme countries. They also reaffirmed that there was no going back to doing business as usual and that "delivering as one" was the future of United Nations development activities. In that regard, we call on the Secretary-General to proceed with the modalities for the independent evaluation of lessons learned in "delivering as one" pilot countries.

In conclusion, let me once again express our gratitude to all those who have contributed to this process. I urge everyone to ensure the swift implementation of this resolution.

Mr. Kim Bonghyun (Republic of Korea): At the outset, my delegation sincerely welcomes the adoption of resolution 64/289. We believe that the resolution will reinforce gender equality, the empowerment of women and the governance of operational activities for the development of the United Nations system in the context of system-wide coherence.

I would also like to applaud the laborious efforts of the co-facilitators and of Ambassador Puri of India in bridging the various gaps among Member States during the long and arduous negotiating period. More than anything else, however, the commitment and aspirations of Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and Deputy Secretary-General Migiro for the realization of the UN Women composite entity should be fully recognized. Their commitments on the issue of system-wide coherence are integral to making the Organization more effective and coherent.

As a strong supporter of the "delivering as one" approach, Korea welcomes the decision of particular countries to use common country programme documents, consistent with the United Nations Development Assistance Framework and other initiatives, to move forward discussions on "delivering as one". As a new member of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development's Development Assistance Committee, my country is planning to increase its overall official development assistance, which we plan to disburse through multiple channels, including the United Nations, in the knowledge that the United Nations will effectively deploy our resources. At the same time, we expect the United Nations to continue to enhance its accountability so that we can be convinced that our resources are being used effectively.

As for the decline in core contributions against non-core contributions to the United Nations development system, we feel that the Organization should continue to examine ways of how non-core contributions can better meet development needs on the ground, while making efforts to increase core contributions. In that regard, the Republic of Korea has been enthusiastic about the creation of a new gender entity. We look forward to close coordination with it as it sets out to fulfil its mandate.

I assure you, Mr. President, of my delegation's full and unwavering support as we move forward. We are confident that the establishment of this singular, synergistic gender entity will go a long way towards fostering women's empowerment throughout all parts of the United Nations system.

Mr. Benítez Versón (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): The Cuban delegation fully supports the statement delivered by Mrs. Moushira Khattab, Minister of State for Family and Population Affairs of Egypt, on behalf of the Joint Coordinating Committee of the Non-Aligned Movement and the Group of 77 and China.

The resolution we have adopted today is the outcome of an arduous process with which we are satisfied. Transparency, inclusiveness and respect for the opinions of all Member States have prevailed. We are therefore grateful for the work of the co-facilitators of the negotiating process, Ambassador Tiina Intelmann of Estonia and Ambassador Ghazi Jomaa of Tunisia. We would also like to express our gratitude for the work undertaken by Ambassador Hardeep Singh Puri of India in facilitating the achievement of a satisfactory agreement for all of us in the final phase.

The creation of a new gender entity constitutes an historic step in the fulfilment of the commitments made at the Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing in 1995 aimed at achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women in the world. Cuba's active participation and innovative proposals in the negotiation of the new entity, whose establishment we support, reflect our country's tradition as a defender of the advancement of women.

Together with the Joint Coordinating Committee, Cuba encouraged most of the governing principles of the new entity that are included in the resolution. In particular, we defend the principle of universality because the advancement of women must be a reality in all countries and all regions. In the negotiations, we championed the creation of a new Executive Board as a governing body for the new entity, which will support the efforts of Member States on the ground. Furthermore, we promote the equitable geographic composition of the Board based on the percentage of the current membership of the General Assembly.

We hope that the new entity, in accordance with the provisions of the resolution adopted today, will develop specific mechanisms in the follow-up to Beijing, including focus on the matter of populations affected by the imposition of unilateral coercive measures contrary to international law.

It is important that the transitional agreements guarantee the continuity of the projects and programmes of the United Nations Development Fund for Women and the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women until the entity starts its work. Furthermore, aspects relating to the regular budget of the entity, as well as the financial regulation to be adopted for operational activities, must be preceded by analysis by the relevant specialized bodies.

Although the resolution makes a clear appeal for strict respect for the national priorities of the recipient countries, the adaptation of the work of the United Nations on the ground to these priorities and the intention to impose single models of development and assistance were specific reasons for the delay in the negotiations that we have concluded successfully today. For Cuba, the main purpose of the funds, programmes and specialized agencies must be to achieve the objectives of the recipient countries in strict respect for the intergovernmental mandates established and avoiding bias towards specific groups of States. In this context, full transparency in the work of the United Nations Chief Executive Board for Coordination is essential.

Cuba has taken due note of the modality that certain sister countries that are members of the Joint Coordinating Committee have adopted in order to carry out the work on the ground for the funds, programmes and specialized agencies — the so-called "delivering as one". For our part, we are paying special attention to the independent evaluation of this exercise, which will be completed in the coming months.

Cuba believes that the process for the selection of experts will be the exclusive responsibility of Member States of each regional group, without interference from the Secretariat or from other regional groups. We hope that the evaluation will take place with the clarity that the case deserves and that Member States will receive due information on the implementation of the evaluating process, its terms of reference and its results.

The section of the resolution referring to financing makes a clear appeal for ensuring that the non-earmarked funds of the budgets, programmes, funds and specialized agencies be the basis of its operations. We are convinced that the critical mass of resources to be mobilized will represent only a small fraction of the exorbitant funds that are wasted on weapons of all types in the world today.

Allow me to conclude by reaffirming Cuba's commitment to the implementation of the resolution and our firm intention to continue to actively promote gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls in the world.

Ms. Blum (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): Colombia aligns itself with the statement made by the representative of Egypt on behalf of the Joint

Coordinating Committee of the States members of the Group of 77 and China and the Non-Aligned Movement. We express our special gratitude to the Permanent Representatives of Egypt and Yemen and to the teams of their Missions for their efficient work in coordinating the position of the two main groups of the developing world, which allowed us to constructively contribute fundamental elements to the resolution that we have adopted today (resolution 64/289).

My delegation welcomes the conclusion of the negotiations of the General Assembly on system-wide coherence that have taken place over several years. We trust that this resolution will allow us to strengthen governance and the financing of the operational activities of the United Nations for development and to harmonize specific institutional practices. We look forward to seeing the report that we have requested from the Secretary-General on the independent evaluation mechanisms, and we will follow up developments in the "delivering as one" model and to the common country programmes.

Colombia especially welcomes the conclusion of the process of reform of the gender architecture and the creation of the new gender entity of the United Nations, UN Women. We are convinced that, with the establishment of the entity, we have taken an historic decision and a fundamental step towards strengthening the ability of the United Nations to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women throughout the world.

My country values the work that has been done to date by people who have committed themselves to the four different entities that now have mandates in women's affairs. We must recognize, however, that the reform adopted will allow us to put an end to institutional fragmentation that has limited opportunities for collective action. Today, we are demonstrating that, with a constructive dialogue, it is possible to find consensus on the reform processes required by the United Nations in order to restore coherence and strengthen the participation of all States in the work of the Organization.

The new entity being established offers a unique opportunity to raise the political profile of gender equality and the empowerment of women at the United Nations and in the international context. The designated institutional set-up ensures the autonomy of the entity in the normative operations and policies defined in the instruments and resolutions of the United Nations. It will at the same time strengthen intergovernmental dialogue on the operational and international cooperation aspects of gender issues through the new Executive Board.

Colombia hopes that the operationalization of the entity will enjoy the necessary financial, technical and human resources to achieve the goals of incorporating the gender perspective into all relevant activities of the United Nations, as well as to give greater support to States in their national efforts, which will allow us to make progress towards gender equality and the empowerment of women throughout the world. We hope that the new entity will demonstrate constructive and effective leadership based on efficiency, transparency and accountability, and that it will be fully capable of respecting the crucial purpose of the United Nations — achieving international cooperation in the different areas relating to its mandates.

To conclude, I would like to express my delegation's gratitude to all Permanent Representatives who acted as facilitators in that process at recent sessions of the General Assembly. In particular, we acknowledge the efforts of the Permanent Representatives of Tunisia and Estonia and the excellent work of the Permanent Representative of India, whose mediation skills made it possible to resolve the most critical issues at the final stage of the consultations that we have completed today.

Colombia declares its backing for the new gender entity and hopes that all States will support it resolutely so that the principles, objectives and hopes reflected in the resolution become a reality that benefits all the women of the world.

Mr. Ntwaagae (Botswana): My delegation joins in welcoming the unanimous adoption of resolution 64/289. We align ourselves with the statement made by the Minister of State for Family and Population Affairs of the Arab Republic of Egypt on behalf of the Joint Coordinating Committee.

We would like to thank Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, Deputy Secretary-General Asha-Rose Migiro and you, Mr. President, for the valuable guidance, contribution and commitment to the general reform process. On behalf of my delegation, I would like to thank the facilitators, my colleagues Mrs. Tiina Intelmann, Permanent Representative of Estonia, and Mr. Ghazi Jomaa, Permanent Representative of

Tunisia, for their tireless efforts in bringing Member States to this consensus decision on the establishment of a new gender entity.

The decision follows almost three years of extensive consultations and negotiations on the structure and operational modalities of the entity. I am pleased to say that the facilitators rose to the challenge, personally investing a great deal of time and energy in exploring the issues thoroughly and in seeking the views of Governments, civil society representatives and officials of the United Nations system through an extensive series of thematic consultations.

We recognize the importance of a strengthened United Nations gender architecture in advancing women's rights and the need to improve gender equality and the empowerment of women in order to build sustainable, just and developed societies. We also recognize that gender equality is a prerequisite to achieving the Millennium Development Goals and other internationally agreed development goals. In that regard, my delegation warmly welcomes the General Assembly's strong and unanimous support for the establishment of a United Nations entity for gender equality and the empowerment of women, to be known as UN Women and to be operational by 1 January 2011.

We strongly believe that the new entity will bring about an important shift in the United Nations work in the area of gender equality and the empowerment of women, and will enable it to respond better to the challenges and more effectively to support countries in their efforts to achieve their development goals. We also welcome the fact that the entity will provide guidance and technical support to Member States on gender equality and the empowerment and rights of women, as well as gender mainstreaming, through its normative support functions and operational activities.

Botswana's commitment to issues concerning the empowerment of women continues to be inspired by its accession to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and its Optional Protocol, among other things. In that context, our country has developed a number of national gender-responsive instruments to guide its efforts.

In conclusion, I wish to reiterate my delegation's unwavering commitment to the promotion and protection of equal rights for all. We remain convinced that we must all do our part in taking the actions needed, as set forth in our common endeavour to meet universal goals.

Mrs. Kafanabo (United Republic of Tanzania): The Government of the United Republic of Tanzania welcomes the consensus adoption of resolution 64/289 on system-wide coherence. We align ourselves with the statement made by Minister Moushira Khattab, Minister of State for Family and Population Affairs of the Arab Republic of Egypt, on behalf of the Joint Coordinating Committee of the Group of 77 and China and the Non-Aligned Movement. We join others in congratulating our two facilitators, Ambassador Intelmann of Estonia and Ambassador Jomaa of Tunisia, for the achievements that we have registered in all areas, in particular in strengthening institutional arrangements for the support of gender equality and the empowerment of women.

Mrs. Kaur (India), Vice-President, took the Chair.

In adopting the resolution, we should applaud our achievement in the decision that we have taken today to establish UN Women, an entity for gender equality and the empowerment of women. The establishment of UN Women should usher in a new era in our efforts to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women. In that regard, we expect the gender entity to have a strong presence in the field and to be better resourced to support the efforts of Governments, in particular those of developing countries, in promoting gender equality and the advancement of women. It is our expectation, too, that UN Women will ensure the coordination and coherence of efforts to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women within the United Nations family in the field and at Headquarters.

Furthermore, the establishment of UN Women and the expectations placed in it should motivate Governments to provide more voluntary contributions to enable the entity to meet the needs of women in the field. We look forward to the operationalization of UN Women, and therefore call on the Secretary-General to appoint a competent Under-Secretary-General of UN Women as a matter of urgency. In that regard, we also welcome today's announcement by the Secretary-General on the appointment of the Deputy Secretary-General to oversee the transition period until a new Under-Secretary-General is appointed. That will ensure continuity in the process of putting in place the new

entity. Women in the field have been eagerly waiting for such a gender entity. Let us not delay them further.

As a pilot country for the "delivering as one" initiative, we welcome the fact that the Secretary-General is encouraged to proceed with the modality for an independent evaluation of country pilots under the initiative, and we wish to underscore the need for a speedy execution of the independent evaluation of pilot countries. We further welcome the support given through the resolution to those countries that wish to present a common country programme document to do so. That is the path that the Government of Tanzania wishes to take as, for our part, it will further strengthen the coherence of United Nations programmes at the country level. We therefore encourage Member States to continue to support the Government of Tanzania and other countries wishing to do that.

In conclusion, allow me also to recognize the leadership that has been provided by the President of the General Assembly, the Secretary-General and the Deputy Secretary-General for the successful conclusion of the negotiations.

Mr. Cuello Camilo (Dominican Republic) (*spoke in Spanish*): The Dominican Republic fully associates itself with the statement made by Mrs. Moushira Khattab, Minister of State for Family and Population Affairs of Egypt, who took the floor on behalf of the Joint Coordinating Committee of the Non-Aligned Movement and the Group of 77 and China.

The Dominican Republic shares the delight of the Member States celebrating the adoption of resolution 64/289 on system-wide coherence, which creates a new entity, UN Women, to bring together hereafter the work previously carried out by four other institutions. Millions of women and girls around the world await us to recognize their rights and their needs, protection and support for their families, justice, opportunities to learn and grow without limitation or fear, to hold important positions in the world and to enjoy equal opportunities in their homes, classrooms and at work. The Dominican Republic hopes that working with and for them from a single institution will enable us to address the many needs that have for so long been unmet in so many corners of the world.

For this reason, the Dominican Republic commends and thanks the Secretary-General, the Deputy Secretary-General and the President of the General Assembly for their leadership, as well as the Vice-President of the General Assembly, the Permanent Representative of India, for guiding us through the difficult process of these past few days.

The Dominican Republic extends its appreciation to the Permanent Representatives of Estonia and Tunisia for their dedicated and tireless work at the forefront of this process and for maintaining a constructive spirit throughout, and to the chairs of the regional groups for their work and spirit of flexibility. We also extend our thanks to the members of the Secretariat, whose assistance has been instrumental to this process.

My country would like especially to thank and recognize the Ambassadors of Egypt and Yemen, representing the Joint Consultative Committee, and members of their respective delegations for their tireless sacrifice and outstanding work, their great negotiating skills, their spirit of solidarity in defence of the interests of all members of our group, their determination to see our concerns reflected in the text we have adopted today, and their endless efforts to achieve the necessary agreements both within our group and with other colleagues, all of which have made it possible to reach this happy conclusion.

The Dominican Republic has a long tradition of fighting for gender equality and the rights of women. For that reason, since 1983 our country has hosted the headquarters of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW), providing it with suitable physical facilities and unflagging support, given the developing countries' high political interest in the Institute.

From the Dominican Republic, INSTRAW has done important work with regard to gender training and research. If this were not enough, INSTRAW houses technology support teams that have allowed the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) to continue to function after the earthquake of 12 January devastated its facilities in Haiti. Since then, INSTRAW's premises have housed MINUSTAH's logistical support operations, which could not function in the neighbouring country.

The Dominican Republic believes that the establishment of UN Women will raise the importance of the gender issue to the same level as that of other priority issues of the United Nations, including development, human rights, peace and security. The Dominican Republic trusts that the integration of

INSTRAW's mandate into the functions of UN Women will be effective, resulting in training and research work with greater impact, supported by generous and predictable resources and managed by efficient and able personnel. The Dominican Republic hopes that UN Women will pursue its training and research work from its physical location in the Dominican Republic for the sake of preserving the geographic balance of the Non-Aligned Movement and the Group of 77.

The Dominican Republic is confident that the experience and knowledge acquired by INSTRAW'S staff will be recognized by UN Women, as they deserve consideration within the same categories as other United Nations personnel working in other agencies, even though they have been working for many years based on temporary contracts due to the lack of predictable resources.

May the spirit of compromise that helped us throughout the negotiation process show not only that improving the United Nations system is not a mere exercise in organizational engineering or spending cuts, but that, with coherence, we can efficiently fulfil the dreams of millions of girls and women worldwide with dignity and without discrimination.

Mr. Pankin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The delegation of the Russian Federation was pleased to join the consensus adoption of resolution 64/289 on system-wide coherence. Like other speakers, we thank the current coordinators of the negotiation process, the Permanent Representatives of Tunisia and Estonia, and their predecessors in those positions. My delegation is convinced that, without their sustained combination of diplomatic tact and assistance, we would not have achieved this result. We give the highest possible commendation to India's efforts under Mr. Puri's very professional and effective chairmanship; he was able to resolve problems that seemed at times to all of us insurmountable.

We further welcome the political will and spirit of compromise shown by all participants in the negotiation process, including individual States Members and groups of States. This was to be expected when the issue at stake was the harmonious functioning of the United Nations system, including the important issue of ensuring gender equality and expanding women's rights.

The resolution provides for a number of important measures aimed at improving system-wide coherence and avoiding duplication. First and foremost among those measures is reform of the United Nations gender architecture and the creation of a new hybrid body on that topic. This step is unprecedented in all its aspects, as similar structures do not exist within the structure of the Organization. We are satisfied by the agreement reached on that question. We feel that the compromise outcome will enable us to resolve the task of improving the effectiveness of the United Nations in this field.

We also believe that one guarantee of the effective functioning of the future hybrid instrument is the universal geographical scope of its mandate covering all countries and all regions, for no State in the world today is entirely free of violations against women's rights.

Another important element is this instrument's accountability to Member States. Its functioning will be reviewed three years after the resolution's adoption. It is therefore important to prevent any disruption of work during the so-called transition period. The Russian delegation believes that the provisions of the resolution will avert any such situation.

We also welcome the balanced wording of the resolution regarding the management, financing and assessment of the operational activities and harmonization of procedures. We support the decision to enhance transparency and accountability in the work of the United Nations Chief Executives Board for Coordination. We believe that this will serve as a sound basis for enhancing the efficiency of cooperation among Member States in the Economic and Social Council and the Committee for Programme and Coordination.

A serious step forward has been made in regard to the procedures for adopting common country programmes. It was important that a realizable and practical option was chosen, affirming the mandate and prerogatives of the executive boards of programmes and funds. Of course, at the same time, the Chief Executives Board will of course continue to act as a platform for discussion of the issues common to all bodies at the country level, but it must preserve its strictly unofficial status.

We welcome the "delivering as one" pilot initiative. A great deal will depend on the precise fulfilment of the agreements achieved on the establishment of assessment bodies. We are ready to participate actively in developing the format and

modalities of a future possible independent assessment system, with a thematic scope of work to be defined in the United Nations operational activities. We believe that the proposal submitted to the Secretary-General will ensure agreement within the United Nations and the involvement of all interested entities.

We believe that future discussion of the issue of enhancing the effectiveness of the United Nations system will take place within the framework of a regular four-year review of its operational activities, for which we should start preparing at the sixty-fifth session of the Assembly. In this way, the process of consultations on system-wide coherence has reached its conclusion.

Finally, the resolution we have adopted today is as yet only a document. When it comes to translating its provisions into practical measures, its effectiveness will depend on all of us. We States Members of the United Nations are responsible for the decisions we make and for the effectiveness of our Organization.

Mr. Sumi (Japan): At the outset, my delegation would like to express our sincere appreciation to the President of the General Assembly, Mr. Treki, and facilitators Ambassador Intelmann and Ambassador Jomaa for their dedicated leadership, patience and tireless efforts, which have led us to an agreement on today's landmark resolution 64/289. We also extend our appreciation to Ambassador Puri for his commitment and excellent coordination during the final stage of the negotiations. Our thanks also go to Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and Deputy Secretary-General Migiro for their strong leadership. Had we not had that leadership, we would not have achieved the adoption of the resolution today.

My delegation welcomes the adoption by consensus of the resolution on system-wide coherence and its creation of a new entity, UN Women. In fact, this is something of an historic moment, as our action unites four currently separate gender-related bodies and ensures that leadership will be provided at a higher level by an Under-Secretary-General. We hope that the Secretary-General will appoint the leader of the new body in a timely manner. For its part, Japan will spare no effort to support UN Women and its head in their efforts to mainstream gender throughout the United Nations system.

Throughout the discussions on this issue, it has been Japan's strong conviction that the United Nations system should tighten the links between its normative and policymaking functions and its operational activities. The system should make the bottom-up and the top-down processes echo one another, mutually reinforcing each other in order to improve the coherence and the effectiveness of the Organization's work, including in the area of gender equality and the empowerment of women.

My delegation will carefully observe and check to see if substantial efficiency gains are achieved in the implementation of this hard-won resolution, and if the savings generated are reinvested into programme activities intended to address the real issues on the ground in support of women in need of protection and empowerment.

Finally, my delegation very much hopes that the new entity, UN Women, will cooperate closely with other agencies in a manner that contributes to the mainstreaming of the gender perspective and policies throughout the United Nations system and that enhances the coherence of gender-related activities conducted by various United Nations agencies on the ground.

Mr. Errázuriz (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): Like other delegations, we associate ourselves with the statement by Minister Moushira Khattab on behalf of the Joint Coordinating Committee. We welcome the historic adoption of resolution 64/289, creating the long-awaited United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women).

Almost four years after the publication of the report of the High-Level Panel on United Nations System-wide Coherence (A/61/583), and after prolonged negotiations in which our country participated actively in support, the joint efforts of Member States and civil society have led to the creation of an entity that will enable us to respond effectively to the aspirations of women all over the world. We hope that UN Women will be fully operational as soon as possible and that its funding will be supported. We also call for the transition process to be conducted in a way that will not unnecessarily prejudice operations on the ground or personnel working in the four institutions subsumed into UN Women.

We would like to thank the Permanent Representatives of Estonia and Tunisia as facilitators of the process, the Permanent Representatives of Yemen and Egypt for their leadership and

contributions, and the Permanent Representative of India, Ambassador Puri, who contributed so much to the success of the negotiations. Clearly, the President of the General Assembly, the Secretary-General and the Deputy Secretary-General deserve our gratitude and thanks for this result. We also thank the staff of the United Nations Development Fund for Women, the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women, the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, and the Division for the Advancement of Women, as well as all the experts who took part in the negotiations for so many years.

We understand that every delegation has had to make concessions, including us. We believe that the higher good will prevail, and in this case the creation of the entity is a benefit our country has long desired, knowing that through it we are contributing to the greater coherence, efficiency, transparency and accountability of the United Nations system in matters of gender and to its progress towards the gender equality and the empowerment of women to which we all aspire.

Ms. Rovirosa (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): Mexico welcomes the Assembly's adoption by consensus of resolution 64/289 on system-wide coherence, establishing the new gender entity UN Women. Its broad mandate and necessary leadership in promoting the gender perspective throughout the United Nations system will give new impetus to a topic that is important to all.

I would like to express our gratitude to the Permanent Representatives of Estonia and Tunisia for the way in which they guided our discussions, and to the Permanent Representative of India, Ambassador Puri, who, in his capacity as Vice-President of the General Assembly, was able to give the process the political impetus necessary for its conclusion. Our thanks go to all delegations for their contributions and efforts.

The establishment of UN Women reflects the commitment of all States Members of the United Nations to gender equality and the empowerment of women. Moreover, it is an demonstration that we can reach agreement and reconcile various points of view for a higher common good. The recognition that gender equality is a topic of universal scope and the prioritization of the promotion and protection of the human rights of women and girls are encouraging indicators of the impact that the new entity will have on the lives of thousands of women and girls throughout the world.

Working on the basis of those principles and defining innovative areas for State participation, we hope that a greater number of countries will support the operational activities of the entity. However, there is no question of reinventing everything. The key to success will be in building on the experience and excellent work carried out for years by such exemplary institutions as the United Nations Development Fund for Women and the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women. In Latin America and the Caribbean, these institutions are widely recognized for their contribution to gender equality in our region. We hope that the entity will seek to strengthen their programmes and actions for the women and girls of our region.

Civil society and non-governmental organizations have always been at the forefront with regard to gender equality and the promotion of women's rights. We are certain that they will continue to be strategic partners of the entity and that the spheres of dialogue and cooperation between States and civil society will strengthen.

As we have frequently pointed out, my delegation believes it of the greatest importance to increase the coherence and effectiveness on the ground of the United Nations development work. It is necessary to maximize the benefits of international efforts for development, in particular in a complex economic context, such as that of the current economic and financial crisis.

We believe that the adoption of this resolution marks a significant development in that regard, given the inherent difficulties in transforming a complex system. We are convinced that, in the relevant areas, the principles and mandates included in the resolution will greatly contribute to increasing coherence in the Organization's work.

Mr. Wetland (Norway): By establishing the new gender entity, UN Women, today, we are truly rectifying an anomaly. We hope that this will prove to be a historic day for us, and in particular for the more than half the world's population that is female, whose prospects and possibilities in life are inferior to those of boys and men in all countries. However, I believe that it is also fair to say that it is a historic day for the

other half of the human population — those men and boys who benefit from healthy, educated girls and women taking part in all aspects of societal activities. The voluntary presentations of national policies on gender equality and the empowerment of women in the Economic and Social Council this week have revealed that, while progress is under way in most countries, women are still disadvantaged.

Now, we are entering a period of transition. The new entity must be given the teeth and resources needed to allow it to serve countries' needs and expectations. Leadership will be essential in that regard. It is our view that the selection of the Under-Secretary-General to head the new entity is extremely important. We trust that the Secretary-General will be guided by Article 101 of the Charter and that we, the Member States, will assist him in finding the strong and competent leader that we need.

During the transition period, it will be particularly important to ensure that all activities currently carried out by the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) can continue and that the dissolution of UNIFEM as a separate entity does not translate into any disruption in the field or at Headquarters.

Norway is among the countries that have supported the gender structures of the United Nations both politically and financially in the past, and we will follow the appointment of the new leadership and the transition process and assess how we can and will contribute.

Mr. Govender (South Africa): My delegation aligns itself with the statement made by Minister Moushira Khattab, Minister of State for Family and Population Affairs of the Arab Republic of Egypt, on behalf of the Joint Coordinating Committee of the States members of the Group of 77 and China and the Non-Aligned Movement.

We are pleased to note that, five years after our leaders committed to courses of action in the 2005 World Summit Outcome (resolution 60/1), we can proclaim — in addition to other achievements, such as the establishment of the Human Rights Council and the Peacebuilding Commission — another milestone in the reform of the new United Nations by adopting resolution 64/289 on system-wide coherence. That collective effort bodes well for us, the international community, in that we can look forward to other outstanding areas of reform, including that of the Bretton Woods institutions and the Security Council.

We are encouraged by the adoption of the resolution in that it clearly signals to us that the work of the United Nations will be enhanced by a more coherent, integrated and well-coordinated machinery that will continuously monitor how it conducts its business by adopting better practices that will further the development agenda by integrating its governance framework, by further aligning its funding and programmes in a coherent and proactive manner consistent with country programmes and priorities, and by undertaking regular evaluations through a lessons-learned approach.

The adoption of the resolution today marks an additional achievement, first, for the women of our world in according overdue recognition by elevating issues that are core to the well-being of women; secondly, for the United Nations as the integral global representative body by taking forward a powerful mandate on behalf of women; and thirdly, for the international community by bolstering our commitment to continuing to empower, advance and protect the interests of women.

We look forward to the earliest operationalization of the new entity and count on its head being an ardent champion of the challenges and concerns of the billions of women around the world, especially on pressing social issues, such as poverty, health, education and violence. We also anticipate that the new Under-Secretary-General will amplify the economic and political voice of women.

On consolidating the former United Nations gender agencies and programmes into the new body, we recognize that their mandates and functions will continue at the country level. I wish to express my delegation's sincere appreciation for the sterling work and contributions that those agencies and programmes have made in furthering the interests and concerns of women. South Africa will work closely with the new entity, UN Women, in carrying out its mandate.

The Acting President: We have heard the last speaker in explanation of position.

The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 114.

The meeting rose at 5.40 p.m.

United Nations A/64/PV.105

General Assembly

Official Records

Sixty-fourth session

105th plenary meeting
Tuesday, 6 July 2010, 3 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Ali Abdussalam Treki ..... (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya)

The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Address by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II

The President: This afternoon, the General Assembly will hear an address by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II on the occasion of her visit to the United Nations.

Allow me now to make a brief statement.

(*spoke in Arabic*)

On behalf of the Member States of the United Nations, allow me to extend our warmest welcome to Her Majesty on her first visit to the United Nations since 1957. We are delighted to have her here with us on this momentous occasion and we are honoured to hear her address the General Assembly today.

As Queen of the United Kingdom and 15 other countries, and as head of the Commonwealth of Nations comprised of 54 member countries, she represents over 2 billion people, from Asia and the Pacific to Africa and from the Americas and the Caribbean to the British Isles. Her Majesty embodies the globalized world and shared humanity that also define the United Nations and give it purpose.

When she last addressed the United Nations 53 years ago, the world was rebuilding from a devastating world war. Cold war tensions and nuclear annihilation threatened the existence of all humankind. Equality and non-discrimination were still unrealized and women were expected to stay at home. Since that occasion, she has presided over a remarkable global transformation that saw the birth of a multitude of independent nation-States based on the principles of equal rights and the self-determination of all peoples that are enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.

We now live in a world where upheaval and change are the norm and the pace of change has quickened. While there has been unprecedented economic prosperity, the world remains blighted by extreme levels of inequality, with billions of people living in absolute poverty. Natural disasters occur more frequently and with greater devastation, while new threats and pressures have also emerged. When such disasters and tragedies force us to confront our human frailty, Her Majesty has lifted the spirits of those in shock, letting them know that they were not alone in their suffering. And in times of horror following acts of terrorism, her words of comfort and her steadfast presence in the face of uncertainty have brought solace and reassurance.

We at the United Nations are focused on making the world a better place, standing up for justice and peace, relieving suffering and helping the poor to lift themselves out of poverty. We often come up short and do not live up to our commitments or meet the expectations that are laid upon us. Through Her Majesty's sense of duty and tireless public service, she has demonstrated to those of us at the United Nations that we must not waver from our purpose and that we must remain steadfast in our will and determination because the poor, the disadvantaged and the weak do not have the luxury of our failure. That is our ideal and we must live up to it.

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10-43705 (E)

Please recycle

I now give the floor to Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon.

The Secretary-General: We are honoured by Her Majesty's presence. In a changing and churning world, she is an anchor for our age. Her reign spans the decades, from the challenges of the cold war to the threat of global warming; from the Beatles to Beckham and from television to Twitter. Throughout the years, she has travelled the world and met its people. She has become a living symbol of grace, constancy and dignity.

In 1957, she first visited this Hall when the United Nations was still young (see A/PV.707). Over half a century ago, she told the General Assembly that the future would be shaped by more than the formal bonds that unite us; it would be shaped by the strength of our devotion to the hopes and great ideals of the Charter of the United Nations: peace, justice and prosperity.

With Her Majesty at the helm, the United Kingdom and the Commonwealth have contributed immensely to the United Nations. Today, the four largest providers of United Nations peacekeeping troops are Commonwealth countries. Around the world, she is working with us to foster development, advance human rights and promote global security.

In September, we will gather to advance that mission further still by pushing for progress towards the Millennium Development Goals. That is the blueprint of the world's leaders to save the lives of the poor and vulnerable, to combat hunger and disease, to promote gender equality and to provide education, opportunity and decent work to billions of people. We will once again heed Her Majesty's call and devote our full strength to the ideals of the Charter and to realizing a better world for all.

For her dedication to the United Kingdom and the Commonwealth and to the United Nations and our common values, we say thank you and welcome. We wish her continued good health and we are happy to have her here today.

The President: I now have the honour to invite Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II to address the General Assembly.

Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II: I believe I was last here in 1957. Since then, I have travelled widely and met many leaders, ambassadors and statesmen from around the world. I address the General Assembly today as Queen of 16 United Nations Member States and as head of the Commonwealth of 54 countries.

I have also witnessed great change, much of it for the better, particularly in science and technology and in social attitudes. Remarkably, many of these sweeping advances have come about not because of Governments, committee resolutions or central directives — although all these have played a part — but instead because millions of people around the world have wanted them. For the United Nations, these subtle yet significant changes in people's approach to leadership and power might have foreshadowed failure and demise. Instead, the United Nations has grown and prospered by responding and adapting to these shifts.

But also, many important things have not changed. The aims and values which inspired the United Nations Charter endure: to promote international peace, security and justice; to relieve and remove the blight of hunger, poverty and disease; and to protect the rights and liberties of every citizen.

The achievements of the United Nations are remarkable. When I was first here, there were just three United Nations operations overseas; now, over 120,000 men and women are deployed in 26 missions across the world. The Organization has helped to reduce conflict, it has offered humanitarian assistance to millions of people affected by natural disasters and other emergencies, and it has been deeply committed to tackling the effects of poverty in many parts of the world.

But so much remains to be done. Former Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld once said that constant attention by a good nurse may be just as important as a major operation by a surgeon. Good nurses get better with practice; sadly, the supply of patients never ceases.

This September, leaders will meet to agree on how to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, when each nation will have its own distinctive contribution to make. New challenges have also emerged which have tested this Organization as much as its Member States. One such is the struggle against terrorism. Another challenge is climate change, where careful account must be taken of the risks faced by smaller, more vulnerable nations, many of them from the Commonwealth.

I started by talking about leadership. I have much admiration for those who have the talent to lead, particularly in public service and in diplomatic life. I congratulate you, Mr. President, your colleagues and your predecessors on your many achievements.

It has perhaps always been the case that the waging of peace is the hardest form of leadership of all. I know of no single formula for success, but over the years I have observed that some attributes of leadership are universal and are often about finding ways of encouraging people to combine their efforts, their talents, their insights, their enthusiasm and their inspiration to work together.

Since I addressed the General Assembly last, the Commonwealth, too, has grown vigorously to become a group of nations representing nearly 2 billion people. It gives its wholehearted support to the significant contributions to the peace and stability of the world made by the United Nations and its agencies. Last November, when I opened the Commonwealth heads of Government meeting in Trinidad and Tobago, I told the delegates that the Commonwealth had the opportunity to lead. Today, I offer the United Nations the same message.

For over six decades, the United Nations has helped to shape the international response to global dangers. The challenge now is to continue to show this clear and convening leadership while not losing sight of the Organization's ongoing work to secure the security, prosperity and dignity of our fellow human beings.

When people 53 years from now look back on us, they will doubtless view many of our practices as old-fashioned. But it is my hope that, when judged by future generations, our sincerity, our willingness to take a lead and our determination to do the right thing will stand the test of time.

In my lifetime, the United Nations has moved from being a high-minded aspiration to being a real force for common good. That of itself has been a signal achievement. But we are not gathered here to reminisce. In tomorrow's world, we must all work together as hard as ever if we are truly to be united nations.

The President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to express our deep appreciation to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II for her important and inspiring address.

The meeting rose at 3.30 p.m.

United Nations A/64/PV.106

General Assembly
Sixty-fourth session

Official Records

106th plenary meeting
Friday, 9 July 2010, 3 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Ali Abdussalam Treki ..... (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Mohamed (Maldives), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

Agenda item 53 (*continued*)

Sustainable development

(b) Follow-up to and implementation of the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States

Report of the Preparatory Committee for the high-level review to assess progress made in addressing the vulnerabilities of small island developing States through the implementation of the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (A/CONF.218/PC/1)

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it a draft decision recommended by the Preparatory Committee for the high-level review to assess progress made in addressing the vulnerabilities of small island developing States through the implementation of the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States in paragraph 18 of its report (A/CONF.218/PC/1).

The Assembly will now take action on the draft decision contained in paragraph 18 of the Preparatory Committee, which is entitled "Organization of the high-level review to assess progress made in addressing the vulnerabilities of small island developing States through the implementation of the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States".

The Preparatory Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly the adoption of the draft decision. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to adopt the draft decision?

The draft decision was adopted.

The Acting President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of sub-item (b) of agenda item 53.

Agenda item 114 (*continued*)

Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit

Draft resolution (A/64/L.58)

The Acting President: Members will recall that the General Assembly held the debate on agenda item 114 jointly with agenda items 48, 120 and 121 at its 47th plenary meeting on 16 November 2009. Members will also recall that under this item, jointly with agenda items 48 and 53 (b) and (f), the Assembly adopted decision 64/555 at its 82nd plenary meeting on 15 April 2010 and resolutions 64/184, 64/265 and 64/289 at its 66th, 86th and 104th plenary meetings on

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10-44285 (E)

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21 December 2009 and 13 May and 2 July 2010, respectively.

I now give the floor to the representative of Qatar to introduce draft resolution A/64/L.58.

Mr. Al-Nasser (Qatar) (*spoke in Arabic*): On behalf of its sponsors, I have the honour to introduce the draft resolution contained in document A/64/L.58, entitled "The right to education in emergency situations". Australia, Bangladesh, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Croatia, the Dominican Republic, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Israel, Italy, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Mexico, Monaco, Montenegro, New Zealand, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Uruguay have become co-sponsors of the draft resolution.

The right to education is one of the basic human rights agreed internationally and enshrined in international law. However, the enjoyment of this right is facing growing threats around the world, particularly in emergency situations resulting from armed conflicts and natural disasters. This situation calls for special attention to the realization of that right in those cases. It is time for the General Assembly to address this important issue by adopting a resolution on the matter, especially given the fact that enabling children everywhere to complete a full course of primary schooling is one of the pillars of the implementation of the United Nations Millennium Declaration (resolution 55/2).

The draft resolution before the Assembly today, the first of its kind, reflects the heightened international attention focused on the need to ensure the protection of this fundamental right, especially in cases where it is under serious threat. The draft resolution is comprehensive and holistic and addresses the various dimensions of the issue, including its legal, political and humanitarian aspects. It also addresses funding. The draft resolution also addresses all stages of humanitarian response, that is, emergency preparedness, emergency situations and the post-conflict or post-disaster stage.

The main co-sponsors of the draft resolution — Benin, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Norway and Qatar — moved to convene an interactive thematic dialogue of the General Assembly on this matter. The meeting was held at the sixty-third session of the General Assembly on 18 March 2009 and contributed to highlighting the threats to the right to education, especially in times of crises and emergencies. The meeting emphasized the need for the General Assembly to adopt a resolution on the right to education in emergency situations.

The consensus on the draft resolution before us is the culmination of cross-regional efforts. Its elements were established in extensive consultations with all stakeholders, including such United Nations agencies as UNESCO and UNICEF, and relevant civil society organizations, such as Save the Children.

In its preamble, the draft resolution reaffirms that everyone shall enjoy the human right to education and recalls the relevant international documents, while underscoring the fact that the Convention on the Rights of the Child must constitute the standard in the promotion and protection of the rights of the child and the realization of the right to education.

The text condemns the targeting of schoolchildren, students and teachers, as well as attacks on educational institutions, while acknowledging that protecting schools and providing education in emergencies should remain a key priority for the international community.

The draft resolution expresses deep concern over the inadequate level of funding for international education goals and calls on donors to continue to support humanitarian funding channels and to contribute to education programmes.

In the operative part of the draft resolution, the Assembly welcomes the work of the Special Rapporteur on the right to education and the Committee on the Rights of the Child, notes with appreciation the work of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, and recognizes the establishment of the education cluster of the United Nations Inter-Agency Standing Committee and other initiatives to address educational needs in emergency situations, including through partnerships for the implementation of the "Minimum standards for education: preparedness, response and recovery" handbook of the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies.

It urges Member States to implement strategies and policies to ensure and support the realization of the right to education as an integral element of humanitarian assistance and humanitarian response. It

recommends that Member States ensure access to education in emergencies and urges respect for civilians, including students and educational personnel and for civilian objects such as educational institutions. It urges Member States to criminalize attacks on educational buildings in order to prevent and combat impunity, while stressing that such attacks may constitute grave breaches of the Geneva Conventions and war crimes under the Rome Statute.

In the part on reconstruction and post-emergency situations, the draft resolution urges States to provide quality education in emergency situations. In the part on follow-up, it requests the Special Rapporteur on the right to education to include in his next interim report to the General Assembly an update on his report on the right to education in emergencies, in order to identify gaps and remaining challenges in ensuring the right to education in emergency situations.

Allow me, in conclusion, to express my thanks and gratitude to all the delegations that participated in the consultations on the draft resolution for their constructive cooperation, which has resulted in the consensus on the text. We hope that the draft resolution will be adopted today by consensus.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/64/L.58, entitled "The right to education in emergency situations." May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/64/L.58?

Draft resolution A/64/L.58 was adopted (resolution 64/290).

The Acting President: I call on those representatives who wish to make statements on the resolution just adopted.

Mr. Grauls (Belgium): On behalf of the European Union (EU), I would like to thank the Governments of Benin, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Norway and Qatar for forging a cross-regional partnership to come to a resolution related to last year's General Assembly thematic dialogue on education in emergencies. The EU is very pleased with the interest many delegations have shown, which has resulted in constructive consultations leading up to resolution 64/290, adopted today.

The candidate country, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia and the European Free Trade Association country Liechtenstein, members of the European economic area; as well as the Republic of Moldova, Armenia and Georgia align themselves with this statement.

The message of the resolution is clear. Education in emergencies deserves full attention at the same level as other equally important, life-saving needs that humanitarian assistance aims to address during an emergency, such as food, shelter, protection, water, sanitation and so on.

From the outset, the EU has engaged with partners to work on the resolution, stressing the universal character of the right to education in accordance with fundamental instruments such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. The European Union would like to take this opportunity to state for the record that this resolution in no way alters the current norms and obligations of international law, in particular human rights and international humanitarian law, but merely attempts to clarify how those standards relate to the issue of education.

We commend the establishment of the education cluster of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee to address, in a coordinated manner, educational needs in emergency situations, including through partnerships for the implementation of the "Minimum standards for education: preparedness, response and recovery" handbook of the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies. Furthermore, we sincerely believe in financing according to assessed needs as a primary way to respond to the humanitarian needs of affected populations.

The European Union commends the work of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the United Nations agencies that provide humanitarian assistance, as well as the work of the special rapporteurs who monitor the specific issue of the right to education. The European Union also welcomes in particular the work of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict on violations and abuses committed against children in armed conflict, and

continues to encourage the fulfilment of her precious task.

The European Union appreciates this resolution as an excellent one-off opportunity to consolidate all relevant issues concerning the right to education in emergency situations, while entrusting further follow-up to the appropriate United Nations bodies.

Mr. González (Costa Rica) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to begin by thanking the President for convening this plenary meeting of the General Assembly. I would also like to thank the Permanent Representative of Qatar for introducing resolution 64/290, entitled "The right to education in emergency situations".

In most cases, humanitarian emergencies interrupt, deteriorate or partially or totally destroy access to the right to education. Furthermore, attention to this issue by the humanitarian actors that provide assistance is very limited or non-existent since most humanitarian assistance is limited to the traditional issues of food, medicine and shelter. This makes it even more difficult to re-establish educational services, sometimes for excessively protracted periods of time.

At the same time, the number of children in the world who do not have access to education because of complex humanitarian situations or natural disasters is alarming. This is undoubtedly not only an individual but also a collective burden in terms of the recovery and reconstruction of the affected areas. Education plays an important role in mitigating and reducing the risk of and vulnerability to natural disasters and in preventing abuses and violations. It is also an effective social investment for promoting development and preventing conflicts.

Costa Rica is proud to have been part of the process culminating in the adoption of today's resolution, which highlights the importance of ensuring the right to education in emergency situations as an integral element of humanitarian assistance. The resolution brings together, in a balanced way, an approach based on human rights with an assessment of needs on the ground so as to ensure a humanitarian response that ensures the continuity and sustainability of funding from the initial response to the emergency to reconstruction.

The resolution is also a reminder that, while we acknowledge education as an imperative of human rights, even in emergency situations, neither the primary obligation of States nor the secondary responsibility of the international community with regard to a minimum level of access to and quality of education for all affected populations, without discrimination of any kind, should be suspended.

We hope that this resolution and the upcoming report of the Special Rapporteur on the right to education may help to identify the main challenges and to propose solutions to address this issue more effectively.

As one of the main sponsors of the resolution, Costa Rica joins in the thanks extended to all delegations that have worked actively and constructively throughout this process.

The Acting President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 114.

The meeting rose at 3.45 p.m.

United Nations A/64/PV.107

General Assembly

Sixty-fourth session

Official Records

107th plenary meeting
Friday, 16 July 2010, 11 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Ali Abdussalam Treki ..... (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya)

In the absence of the President, Mrs. Aitimova (Kazakhstan), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 11.15 a.m.

Agenda item 7 (*continued*)

Organization of work, adoption of the agenda and allocation of items

The Acting President: The General Assembly will now turn to a note by the Secretary-General contained in document A/64/105/Add.1, under sub-item (e) of agenda item 112, concerning the appointment of a member of the International Civil Service Commission.

Members will recall that the General Assembly concluded its consideration of sub-item (e) of agenda item 112 at its 48th plenary meeting on 19 November 2009. In order to enable the General Assembly to consider the note of the Secretary-General, it will be necessary to reopen consideration of sub-item (e) of agenda item 112. May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to reopen consideration of sub-item (e) of agenda item 112?

It was so decided.

The Acting President: Representatives will also recall that, at its 2nd plenary meeting, on 18 September 2009, the General Assembly allocated this sub-item to the Fifth Committee. In order for the Assembly to proceed expeditiously on this sub-item, may I take it that the Assembly agrees to consider this sub-item directly in plenary meeting?

It was so decided.

The Acting President: May I further take it that the Assembly agrees to proceed immediately to the consideration of sub-item (e) of agenda item 112?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 112 (*continued*)

Appointments to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other appointments

(e) Appointment of members of the International Civil Service Commission

Note by the Secretary-General (A/64/105/Add.1)

The Acting President: In his note, the Secretary-General informs the General Assembly that he has received notification of the resignation of Mr. Vladimir Morozov of the Russian Federation from the International Civil Service Commission, effective 28 June 2010. The Assembly will therefore be required to appoint, at its current session, a person to fill the remaining portion of the term of office of Mr. Morozov, that is, until 31 December 2012.

The Secretary-General also informs the General Assembly that the Government of the Russian Federation has nominated Mr. Yevgeny Vladimirovich Afanasiev to fill the vacancy arising from the resignation of Mr. Morozov. The note further states that the Secretariat was informed by the Chair of the Group

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10-45418 (E)

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of Eastern European States that the candidature of Mr. Afanasiev has been endorsed by the Group.

May I, therefore, take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to appoint Mr. Yevgeny Vladimirovich Afanasiev as a member of the International Civil Service Commission for a term of office beginning on 16 July 2010 and ending on 31 December 2012?

It was so decided.

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (e) of agenda item 112?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 127 (*continued*)

International Criminal Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Genocide and Other Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of Rwanda and Rwandan Citizens Responsible for Genocide and Other Such Violations Committed in the Territory of Neighbouring States between 1 January and 31 December 1994

Identical letters dated 2 June 2010 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Security Council (A/64/814)

Letter dated 29 June 2010 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the President of the General Assembly (A/64/862)

Draft decision (A/64/L.60)

The Acting President: We shall now proceed to consider draft decision A/64/L.60.

In connection with draft decision A/64/L.60, I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Botnaru (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): In connection with draft decision A/64/L.60, entitled "International Criminal Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Genocide and Other Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of Rwanda and Rwandan Citizens Responsible for Genocide and Other Such Violations Committed in the Territory of Neighbouring States between 1 January and 31 December 1994", I wish to put on the record the following statement on financial implications on behalf of the Secretary-General, in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly.

By paragraphs (c), (d) and (e) of the draft decision, the General Assembly would:

"(c) [Decide] to extend the terms of office of the following permanent judges at the Tribunal, who are members of the Appeals Chamber, until 31 December 2012 or until the completion of the cases to which they are assigned, if sooner:

Mehmet Güney (Turkey)
Andrésia Vaz (Senegal)

"(d) [Decide] to extend the terms of office of the following permanent judges at the International Tribunal, who are members of the Trial Chambers, until 31 December 2011 or until the completion of the cases to which they are assigned, if sooner:

Charles Michael Dennis Byron (Saint Kitts and Nevis)
Khalida Rachid Khan (Pakistan)
Arlette Ramaroson (Madagascar)
William H. Sekule (United Republic of Tanzania)
Bakhtiyar Tuzmukhamedov (Russian Federation)

"(e) [Decide] to extend the terms of office of the following ad litem judges at the Tribunal, who are members of the Trial Chambers, until 31 December 2011 or until the completion of the cases to which they are assigned, if sooner:

Aydin Sefa Akay (Turkey)
Florence Rita Arrey (Cameroon)
Solomy Balungi Bossa (Uganda)
Vagn Joensen (Denmark)
Gberdao Gustave Kam (Burkina Faso)
Lee Gacuiga Muthoga (Kenya)
Seon Ki Park (Republic of Korea)
Mparany Mamy Richard Rajohnson (Madagascar)
Emile Francis Short (Ghana)".

On 28 May 2010, the President of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda provided the Security Council with his assessment of the implementation of the completion strategy of the Tribunal (see S/2010/289). The President informed the

Council that, due to delays in certain trials and judgement writing, the recent apprehension of fugitives and staffing constraints have resulted in the revision of projections related to the completion strategy. Accordingly, the President requested that the terms of office of the aforementioned judges be extended, as outlined above. The cost associated with the extension of the judges is estimated at $1,392,200 for the biennium 2010-2011.

The delay in the completion strategy, for the reasons I have just outlined, has a significant impact on the functioning and overall resource requirements of the Tribunal. Accordingly, the Secretary-General would present at the main part of the sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly the revised proposals relating to the budget of the Tribunal for the biennium 2010-2011. The additional resource requirements, inter alia, would include the estimates related to the judges.

Accordingly, should the General Assembly adopt the draft decision, details of the resource requirements relating to the extension of the terms of office of the judges would be provided by the Secretary-General to the General Assembly at the main part of its sixty-fifth session in the context of the report on the revised estimates relating to the budget of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda for the biennium 2010-2011.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take action on draft decision A/64/L.60. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to adopt the draft decision?

Draft decision A/64/L.60 was adopted.

The Acting President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 127.

Agenda item 128 (*continued*)

International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991

Identical letters dated 18 June 2010 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Security Council (A/64/841)

Letter dated 29 June 2010 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the President of the General Assembly (A/64/861)

Draft decision (A/64/L.59)

The Acting President: The Assembly shall now proceed to consider draft decision A/64/L.59.

In connection with draft decision A/64/L.59, I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Botnaru (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): In connection with draft decision A/64/L.59, entitled "International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991", I wish to put on record the following statement of financial implications on behalf of the Secretary-General, in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly.

By paragraphs (c), (d) and (e) of the draft decision, the General Assembly would:

> "(c) [Decide] to extend the terms of office of the following permanent judges at the International Tribunal, who are members of the Appeals Chamber, until 31 December 2012 or until the completion of the cases to which they are assigned or until the completion of their term as members of the Appeals Chamber, if sooner:
>
> Carmel Agius (Malta)
> Liu Daqun (China)
> Theodor Meron (United States of America)
> Fausto Pocar (Italy)
> Patrick Robinson (Jamaica)
>
> "(d) [Decide] to extend the terms of office of the following permanent judges at the International Tribunal, who are members of the Trial Chambers, until 31 December 2011 or until the completion of the cases to which they are assigned, if sooner:
>
> Jean-Claude Antonetti (France)
> Guy Delvoie (Belgium)
> Burton Hall (Bahamas)
> Christoph Flügge (Germany)
> O-Gon Kwon (Republic of Korea)
> Bakone Justice Moloto (South Africa)
> Howard Morrison (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)
> Alphons Orie (Netherlands)
>
> "(e) [Decide] to extend the terms of office of the following ad litem judges at the

International Tribunal, who are members of the Trial Chambers, until 31 December 2011 or until the completion of the cases to which they are assigned, if sooner:

Melville Baird (Trinidad and Tobago)
Pedro David (Argentina)
Elizabeth Gwaunza (Zimbabwe)
Frederik Harhoff (Denmark)
Flavia Lattanzi (Italy)
Antoine Kesia-Mbe Mindua (Democratic Republic of the Congo)
Prisca Matimba Nyambe (Zambia)
Michèle Picard (France)
Árpád Prandler (Hungary)
Stefan Trechsel (Switzerland)".

On 31 May 2010, the President of the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia provided the Security Council with his assessment on the implementation of the completion strategy of the Tribunal (see S/2010/270). The President informed the Council that unforeseeable factors beyond the Tribunal's control and staffing constraints had resulted in the revision of projections related to the completion strategy. Accordingly, the President requested that the terms of office of the aforementioned judges be extended, as just outlined.

The cost associated with the extension of the terms of the judges is estimated at $2,975,400 for the biennium 2010-2011. The delay in the completion strategy, for reasons I just outlined, has a significant impact on the functioning and overall resource requirements of the Tribunal.

Accordingly, the Secretary-General will present, during the main part of the sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly, the revised proposals relating to the budget of the Tribunal for the biennium 2010-2011. The additional resource requirements would include, inter alia, the estimates related to the judges.

Accordingly, should the General Assembly adopt the draft decision, details on the resource requirements relating to the extension of the terms of office of the judges would be provided by the Secretary-General to the General Assembly during the main part of its sixty-fifth session in the context of the report on the revised estimates relating to the budget of the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia for the biennium 2010-2011.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take action on draft decision A/64/L.59. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to adopt the draft decision?

Draft decision A/64/L.59 was adopted.

The Acting President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 128.

Agenda items 48 and 114 (*continued*)

Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields

Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit

Draft resolution (A/64/L.61)

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Japan to introduce draft resolution A/64/L.61.

Mr. Takasu (Japan): On behalf of the Government of Japan and the other sponsors, I have the distinct honour to introduce draft resolution A/64/L.61, entitled "Follow-up to paragraph 143 on human security of the 2005 World Summit Outcome".

The sponsors of this draft resolution are Armenia, Austria, Australia, Afghanistan, Benin, Cambodia, Canada, the Central African Republic, Chile, Congo, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Fiji, Greece, Guatemala, Honduras, India, Ireland, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, the Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Mexico, the Federated States of Micronesia, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Nauru, Nepal, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Palau, the Philippines, Papua New Guinea, Saint Lucia, Samoa, Senegal, Slovenia, South Africa, Switzerland, Thailand, Tonga, Tuvalu, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania, the United States of America, Uzbekistan and Vanuatu.

Before presenting the elements of the draft resolution, allow me to briefly touch upon the background behind this first-ever draft resolution of the General Assembly on human security.

Human security is mentioned in paragraph 143 of the 2005 World Summit Outcome document (resolution 60/1), which was unanimously agreed by our political leaders. That paragraph reads as follows:

> "We stress the right of people to live in freedom and dignity, free from poverty and despair. We recognize that all individuals, in particular vulnerable people, are entitled to freedom from fear and freedom from want, with an equal opportunity to enjoy all their rights and fully develop their human potential. To this end, we commit ourselves to discussing and defining the notion of human security in the General Assembly."

To follow up on this important commitment made by our heads of State and Government, Japan took the initiative of organizing, in the United Nations, an informal group called "Friends of Human Security" in October 2006 and promoted the debate on human security among Member States. Since the second meeting, Japan, together with Mexico as Co-Chair, has organized biannual meetings of the Friends of Human Security, which has developed into an open-ended forum for interested Member States and United Nations organizations.

More than 140 Member States have participated in the seven meetings held to date. The Friends of Human Security agreed to promote the human security approach — a human-centred and integrated approach — in addressing United Nations agendas including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), peacebuilding, climate change, humanitarian assistance and protection of women and children, among others. It has done so in a practical manner, on the basis of a working definition of human security: to protect the vital core of all human lives in ways that enhance human freedoms and human fulfilment.

Last year, the Friends of Human Security group took the initiative to request the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Ban Ki-moon, to prepare a full report on human security, which was issued as document A/64/701. We are grateful to the Secretary-General for his contribution, which was an important input for consideration by the General Assembly. We are also grateful to the President of the General Assembly, His Excellency Mr. Ali Treki, for kindly organizing the first formal debate on human security in plenary meeting, held on 20 and 21 May.

As the initiator of the debate, we are pleased with the positive, high-quality participation of so many and with the strong support expressed for the significance of the human security approach. I believe the constructive debates have greatly facilitated broadening the common understanding of human security among Member States and have faithfully implemented the commitment of our leaders.

In the preambular paragraphs of the draft resolution before us, the General Assembly recalls paragraph 143 of the 2005 World Summit Outcome and reaffirms its respect for all the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. Human security will be promoted in the United Nations in conformity with the Charter. Article 1 of the Charter lists the purposes of the United Nations, namely international peace and security, friendly relations among nations, cooperation in the economic, social, cultural and humanitarian fields, and respect for human rights. Article 2 lists the principles of the United Nations, which include sovereign equality, peaceful settlement of disputes, refraining from the threat or use of force against territorial integrity, and non-intervention in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of Member States.

In the operative part of the draft resolution, the General Assembly takes note of the Assembly's first formal debate on human security, held in May, in which Member States actively contributed actively to forging a common understanding of the concept based on the valuable inputs of the Secretary-General in his report on human security.

In the resolution, the Assembly also takes note of the ongoing efforts to define the notion of human security, which have been led by many Governments at the national level, as well as through international initiatives at the regional and global levels. We are fully cognizant of a number of worthwhile initiatives taken in this regard. The draft resolution further recognizes the need to continue discussions to achieve an agreement on the definition of human security.

Finally, the draft resolution requests the Secretary-General to seek the views of the Member States on this important notion and to submit a report to the General Assembly at its sixty-sixth session. We urge the Secretary-General to intensify his interaction with Member States. The General Assembly also decides to continue its consideration of this matter. We look forward to continuing active discussions on human security within the framework of the General Assembly.

Today's multiple and interrelated threats affect the lives of millions of people. Global issues such as the economic and financial crisis, food insecurity, global health problems, issues related to the Millennium Development Goals, climate change, conflict, refugees and internally displaced persons, peacebuilding, drug trafficking, transnational organized crime, gender equality and protection of women and children, to name but a few, affect the security and safety of each and every human being no matter where he or she lives. Vulnerable people suffer most from those global challenges. A country-level aggregated approach will not suffice to effectively tackle these broad and deeply interconnected global issues. We need to address those issues in an integrated and comprehensive manner and to focus not only on the national level but also on the level of the individual. It is within such a context that Governments are expected to comprehensively support the survival, livelihood and dignity of their peoples as a fundamental basis of national security.

The United Nations system has been supporting Member States in addressing human security challenges, including through the United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security, established by the Secretary-General in 1999. The Trust Fund to date has supported projects to enhance human security for vulnerable people in over 80 countries in very concrete ways. There is strong interest in and broad appreciation for this Trust Fund. We urge Member States to make generous contributions to the Fund. We should actively promote and support practical measures aimed at protecting and empowering people and communities, in parallel with the continued discussion in New York towards an agreement on definition.

The adoption of this draft resolution on human security is an important milestone in implementing the commitment set out in the World Summit Outcome and in promoting a human security approach in United Nations activities. I wish in particular to thank the sponsors for their support and their commitment to this initiative. I wish also to express my appreciation to all representatives who participated actively in the negotiations for their understanding. I sincerely hope that the draft resolution will receive the full endorsement of the General Assembly and be adopted by consensus.

The Acting President: I should like to consult the Assembly with a view to proceeding immediately to consider the draft resolution contained in document A/64/L.61. In this connection, since the draft resolution was circulated only this morning, it would be necessary to waive the relevant provision of rule 78 of the rules of procedure, which reads as follows:

> "As a general rule, no proposal shall be discussed or put to the vote at any meeting of the General Assembly unless copies of it have been circulated to all delegations not later than the day preceding the meeting."

Unless I hear any objection, I will take it that the Assembly agrees with this proposal.

It was so decided.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/64/L.61, entitled "Follow-up to paragraph 143 on human security of the 2005 World Summit Outcome". May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/64/L.61?

Draft resolution A/64/L.61 was adopted (resolution 64/291).

The Acting President: Before giving the floor to speakers in explanation of position on the resolution just adopted, may I remind delegations that explanations of vote or position are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Ms. Méndez Romero (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela expresses its most sincere gratitude to the delegations of Japan and Jordan for the constructive, open and flexible manner in which they conducted the negotiations on draft resolution A/64/L.61 and for their tireless efforts to accommodate the concerns of all delegations in the text. Our delegation has joined the consensus on the resolution because we consider it necessary to continue the debate on the notion of human security and to agree on a consensus definition of the notion within the General Assembly before promoting its implementation in activities of the United Nations system.

Our delegation joined the consensus on the draft resolution also based on the understanding that the discussion on the notion of human security should focus exclusively on the economic and social development of our peoples and on seeking the well-being of human beings through the full and effective exercise of the right to development.

Here, it is our understanding that the notion of human security and its future definition should be aimed at eradicating poverty, hunger, marginalization and social exclusion and at achieving social justice and the full development of our peoples. In addition, my delegation believes that the debate on the notion of human security should be confined to the fundamental principles and purposes of the United Nations Charter. In this regard, it is our understanding that any future definition of the notion of human security should be based on unrestricted respect for the principles of sovereignty, equality among States, territorial integrity, non-interference in the internal affairs of States and non-use of force.

Mr. Salsabili (Islamic Republic of Iran): The delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran joined the consensus today on resolution 64/291, entitled "Follow-up to paragraph 143 on human security of the 2005 World Summit Outcome", with a view to continuing consideration of the notion of human security within the framework of the General Assembly and in order to come up with a negotiated agreed definition of this notion in a transparent and inclusive manner. Such a definition must closely follow and be in line with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, including respect for the sovereignty, political independence and territorial integrity of Member States, as well as non-interference in the internal affairs of States Members of the United Nations.

My delegation takes this opportunity to commend the delegations of Japan and Jordan for their professional and transparent conduct of the negotiations on the resolution at hand.

Mr. De Bassompierre (Belgium): I would like to make a statement on behalf of the European Union.

The European Union would like to thank the delegations of Japan and Jordan for their efforts to reach consensus on resolution 64/291, on human security. The European Union is well aware of the added value of the concept of human security as a means to empower people to address, holistically, the multidimensional threats and challenges that we face today. The concept should be considered in a balanced way. There is no development without security, no security without development, and neither without respect for human rights.

We welcome the adoption of the resolution and would like to reaffirm the European Union's support of Japan's and Jordan's efforts on human security.

The Acting President: We have heard the last speaker in explanation of position. The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda items 48 and 114.

The meeting rose at 11.50 a.m.

United Nations A/64/PV.108

General Assembly
Sixty-fourth session

Official Records

108th plenary meeting

Wednesday, 28 July 2010, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Ali Abdussalam Treki ..... (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Mohamed (Maldives), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda item 112 (*continued*)

Appointments to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other appointments

(i) Appointment of the Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services

Note by the Secretary-General (A/64/873)

The Acting President: Members will recall that the Assembly, in its resolution 48/218 B of 29 July 1994, decided to establish an Office of Internal Oversight Services under the authority of the Secretary-General, the head of which would be at the rank of Under-Secretary-General.

By that resolution, the Assembly further decided that the Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services should be an expert in the fields of accounting, auditing, financial analysis and investigations, management, law or public administration and should be appointed by the Secretary-General, following consultations with Member States, and approved by the General Assembly. For this purpose, the Secretary-General should appoint the Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services with due regard for geographic rotation and in so doing should be guided by the provisions of paragraph 3 (e) of resolution 46/232 of 2 March 1992, in which the Assembly decided, in particular, that as a general rule no national of a Member State should succeed a national of that State in a senior post and that there should be no monopoly on senior posts by nationals of any State or group of States. The Assembly also decided that the Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services should serve for one fixed term of five years without possibility of renewal and may be removed by the Secretary-General only for cause and with the approval of the General Assembly.

In light of the provisions of resolution 48/218 B, the Secretary-General proposes to appoint Ms. Carman Lapointe of Canada as Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services for one fixed term of five years beginning on 13 September 2010 and ending on 12 September 2015.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to approve this appointment?

It was so decided.

The Acting President: I call on those representatives who wish to speak on this matter.

Mr. Edrees (Egypt): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Group of African States on the consideration by the General Assembly of the appointment of Ms. Carman Lapointe of Canada as Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services for one fixed term of five years to succeed Ms. Inga-Britt Ahlenius of Sweden, whose term of office ended this month.

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-506. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

10-46629 (E)

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The establishment of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) in 1994 under resolution 48/218 B aimed at strengthening accountability and oversight functions within the United Nations. OIOS has an essential role to play in improving internal control accountability mechanisms and organizational efficiency and effectiveness, in accordance with its mandate as set out in the relevant General Assembly resolutions.

The African Group recalls paragraph 19 of resolution 64/232 on the report of the activities of the OIOS adopted in December 2009 (A/64/326 (Part I)), urging the Secretary-General to "ensure that timely arrangements are made to find a successor in full conformity with the provisions of paragraph 5 (b) of resolution 48/218 B".

As mentioned in the related note of the Secretary-General (A/64/873), paragraph 5 (b) of resolution 48/218 B stated that

> "the Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services shall be appointed by the Secretary-General, following consultations with Member States, and approved by the General Assembly. For this purpose, the Secretary-General shall appoint the Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services with due regard for geographic rotation and in so doing shall be guided by the provisions of paragraph 3 (e) of Assembly resolution 46/232 of 2 March 1992, in which the Assembly decided, in particular, that as a general rule, no national of a Member State should succeed a national of that State in a senior post and that there should be no monopoly on senior posts by nationals of any State or group of States."

Based on that text, the said resolution gave the South the opportunity to assume this post, taking into consideration the fact that the previous Under-Secretary-General holding this position was from the North. Approving the current nomination will mean that, out of four Under-Secretaries-General for that position, three have been from the North. In our view, that does not fulfil the principle of geographic rotation stipulated in the resolution establishing OIOS, in particular, and the standing practice in the United Nations as a whole.

In this regard, the African Group, which is underprivileged and underrepresented in senior positions within the United Nations system, believed that it had a strong claim to that position. The Group also expected that more time would be allowed for consultations with and within the regional groups, particularly when, at this time, most African permanent representatives have not returned yet from Kampala after participating in the fifteenth ordinary session of the Assembly of the African Union.

The African summit in Kampala reaffirmed the instructions to the African Group in New York to work towards addressing the issue of African underrepresentation in senior positions at the United Nations. The Chair of the African Group, Egypt, clearly expressed this position during the meeting of the Secretary-General with the Chairs of the regional groups, informing them of his choice of the new Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services. Egypt, as the Chair of the African Group, wishes today to reiterate and reaffirm that same position.

We truly believe in the importance of keeping unity and a positive spirit of agreement within the United Nations, especially at this time of serious global challenges, in the light of our confidence in the leadership of the Secretary-General, our understanding of the particular circumstances of the case at hand despite the clear provisions of the related resolution, and out of our belief that the Member States under the leadership of the President of the General Assembly and the Secretariat under the leadership of the Secretary-General are effectively in the same boat. If it navigates smoothly, we will all be safe, but if it is shaken, we will all be endangered.

The African Group went with the consensus on the approval by the General Assembly of the appointment by the Secretary-General of Ms. Lapointe as the new Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services. We wish her success during her tenure in this important and critical position in the United Nations and express our confidence that she has the high qualities necessary to carry out the responsibilities and mandates of that position to the fullest. We will cooperate with her to the benefit of the United Nations and all its Member States.

On the other hand, the African Group highlights the need in the near term for African candidates to find their way to and their fair share in senior positions within the United Nations system. In this regard, we

request the Secretary-General to look into ways and means to correct the current imbalance in the near future. Furthermore, geographical rotation is not solely an African issue and should be respected when it comes to the South as a whole. In this regard, we expect that the next appointment to Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services will be allocated to the South for two consecutive terms, or compensated for in other senior-level positions.

Mr. Benítez Versón (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): The Office of Internal Oversight Services has an important role to play in the work of the United Nations. With respect to the post of Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services, Cuba believes that resolution 48/218 B of 29 July 1994 is very clear. Appointment to that post must take geographical rotation duly into account.

Cuba regrets the fact that the important principle of geographical rotation has not been duly taken into account in this opportunity, although we did not oppose the appointment of Ms. Carman Lapointe. In reiterating the importance of compliance with the provisions of resolution 48/218 B, we hope that today's appointment will not set a precedent for the future.

I conclude by wishing every success to the new Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services in her new tasks.

The Acting President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of sub-item (i) of agenda item 112.

Agenda item 7 (*continued*)

Organization of work, adoption of the agenda and allocation of items

The Acting President: Members will recall that the General Assembly concluded its consideration of sub-item (e) of agenda item 111 at its 35th plenary meeting on 3 November 2009.

In order to enable the General Assembly to consider sub-item (e) of agenda item 111, it will be necessary to reopen its consideration.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to reopen consideration of sub-item (e) of agenda item 111?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 111 (*continued*)

Elections to fill vacancies in principal organs

(e) Election of twenty-nine members of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme

Letter dated 22 July 2010 from the Permanent Representative of Croatia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly (A/64/869)

The Acting President: The Assembly will now proceed to a by-election to elect one member of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme under sub-item (e) of agenda item 111.

Members will recall that, at its 35th plenary meeting on 3 November 2009, the General Assembly elected 29 members of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme for a term of office beginning on 1 January 2010 and ending on 31 December 2013.

I would like to draw the attention of members to document A/64/869 containing a letter dated 22 July 2010 from the Permanent Representative of Croatia to the United Nations, announcing that Croatia would like to relinquish its seat on the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme as of 31 December 2010 for the remaining term in favour of Belarus.

As a result, a vacancy will occur and a new member must therefore be elected to fill the unexpired term of office of Croatia, commencing on 1 January 2011 and expiring on 31 December 2011.

In accordance with paragraph 1 of resolution 2997 (XXVII) of 15 December 1972, and taking into account that the vacancy will occur from among the Eastern European States, the new member should therefore be elected from that region. The President has been informed that the Group of Eastern European States has endorsed Belarus as the candidate for the vacancy.

As members are aware, in accordance with rule 92 of the rules of procedure, all elections shall be held by secret ballot and there shall be no nominations. However, I should like to recall paragraph 16 of General Assembly decision 34/401, whereby the practice of dispensing with the secret ballot for elections to subsidiary organs when the number of

candidates corresponds to the number of seats to be filled should become standard, unless a delegation specifically requests a vote on a given election.

In the absence of such a request, may I take it that the Assembly decides to proceed to the election on that basis?

It was so decided.

The Acting President: May I therefore take it that the Assembly wishes to declare Belarus elected a member of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme for a term of office beginning on 1 January 2011 and expiring on 31 December 2011?

It was so decided.

The Acting President: I congratulate Belarus on its election as a member of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme.

The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of sub-item (e) of agenda item 111.

Agenda item 48 (*continued*)

Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields

Draft resolution (A/64/L.63/Rev.1*)

The Acting President: Members will recall that the General Assembly held the debate on agenda item 48 jointly with agenda items 114, 120 and 121 at its 47th plenary meeting on 16 November 2009, as well as jointly with agenda item 114 at its 88th plenary meeting on 20 May 2010. Members will also recall that, under agenda items 48 and 114, the Assembly adopted resolutions 64/184 and 64/291 at its 66th and 107th plenary meetings on 21 December 2009 and 16 July 2010, respectively, and decision 64/555 at its 82nd plenary meeting on 15 April 2010.

I now give the floor to the representative of the Plurinational State of Bolivia to introduce draft resolution A/64/L.63/Rev.1*.

Mr. Solón (Plurinational State of Bolivia) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me to begin my introduction of draft resolution A/64/L.63/Rev.1* by recalling that human beings are basically made of water. Approximately two thirds of our bodies is composed of water; 75 per cent of our brains is water, and water is the main vehicle for the electrochemical transmissions within our bodies. Our blood circulates throughout our bodies like water flowing in a network of rivers. The water in our blood helps transport nutrients and energy throughout our bodies. Water also carries away waste products excreted by our cells. Water helps regulate body temperature. The loss of 20 per cent of the body's water can lead to death. We can survive for several weeks without food, but we cannot survive more than a few days without water. Water, without a doubt, is life.

That is why, today, we introduce this historic draft resolution for the consideration by the General Assembly at this plenary meeting. The following States are sponsors of the draft resolution: Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Benin, the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Burkina Faso, Burundi, the Central African Republic, Congo, Cuba, Dominica, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Eritrea, Fiji, Georgia, Guinea, Haiti, Madagascar, Maldives, Mali, Mauritius, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Paraguay, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, Saint Lucia, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Seychelles, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, Timor-Leste, Tuvalu, Uruguay, Vanuatu, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and Yemen.

The right to health was originally recognized in 1946 by the World Health Organization. In 1948, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights declared, among other rights, the right to life, the right to education and the right to work. In 1966, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights recognized, among other rights, the right to social security and the right to an adequate standard of living, including adequate food, clothing and housing.

However, the human right to water has gone without full recognition despite the existence of clear references to such a right in several international instruments, including the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

The sponsors of the draft resolution present it today to ensure that the human right to water and sanitation at a time when diseases caused by the lack of

safe drinking water and sanitation result in more deaths than any war. Each year, more than 3.5 million people die from diseases transmitted by contaminated water. Diarrhoea ranks second in the causes death among children under five years of age. Lack of access to safe drinking water kills more children than AIDS, malaria and smallpox combined. Approximately one in eight people around the world does not have safe drinking water. In a single day, women spend more than 200 million hours collecting and transporting water for their homes.

The situation resulting from the lack of sanitation is worse still, affecting as it does some 2.6 billion people, which is equivalent to 40 per cent of world population. In her report, the independent expert on safe drinking water and sanitation, who made an important contribution to the draft resolution and who will contribute further to its implementation, states:

> "Sanitation, more than many other human rights issue, evokes the concept of human dignity; consider the vulnerability and shame that so many people experience every day when, again, they are forced to defecate in the open, in a bucket or a plastic bag. It is the indignity of this situation that causes the embarrassment." (*A/HRC/12/24, para. 55*)

The vast majority of diseases in the world are caused by fecal matter. It is estimated that sanitation could reduce the number of child deaths from diarrhoea by more than two thirds. At any given moment, half of the world's hospital beds are taken up by patients suffering from diseases linked to the lack of access to safe drinking water and sanitation.

Human rights did not come into being as fully developed concepts; they are the fruit of a constructive process shaped by reality and experience. For example, the human rights to education and to work, which are enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, were built up and fleshed out over time with the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and other international instruments. A similar process will take place with the human right to water and sanitation.

We therefore welcome and endorse the provision under the paragraph 3 of the draft resolution that the independent expert should continue working on all aspects of her mandate and report to the General Assembly on the principal challenges related to the realization of the human right to safe and clean drinking water and sanitation and their impact on the achievement of Millennium Development Goals.

The world summit on the Millennium Development Goals is drawing ever nearer, and we must send a very clear signal to the world that access to safe drinking water and sanitation is a human right and that we are going to do everything possible to achieve that goal in the five short years we have left.

Hence the importance of the paragraph 2 of the draft resolution, which calls upon States and international organization to provide financial resources, capacity-building and technology transfer, through international assistance and cooperation, in particular to developing countries, in order to scale up efforts to provide safe, clean, accessible and affordable drinking water and sanitation for all.

There is a heart to every resolution. And the heart of this draft resolution is in its paragraph 1. Throughout the numerous informal consultations, we sought to accommodate the various concerns of Member States, leaving aside issues that are not crucial to this draft resolution and always striving to strike a balance without losing the essence of the draft resolution.

The right to drinking water and sanitation is a human right essential to the full enjoyment of life. Safe drinking water and sanitation are not only principal elements or components of other rights, such as the right to an adequate standard of living. The rights to safe drinking water and sanitation are independent rights, which must be recognized as such. It is not enough to urge States to fulfil their human rights obligations relating to access to drinking water and satiation. It is necessary to call on States to promote and protect the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation.

Once again, in the spirit of always transparently seeking a broad understanding, and without losing our perspective on the very essence of the draft resolution, on behalf of the sponsors we wish to propose an oral revision to the paragraph 1, in which the term "declare" should be replaced by "recognize".

Before the Assembly proceeds to consider the draft resolution, I should like to draw the attention of all delegations to the fact that, according to the 2009 report of the World Health Organization and UNICEF

entitled "Diarrhoea: Why children are still dying and what can be done", every day 24,000 children die in developing countries from causes that could be prevented such as diarrhoea caused by contaminated water. This means that a child dies every three and a half seconds. One, two, three. As they say in my country, now is the time.

The President: We shall now proceed to consider draft resolution A/64/L.63/Rev.1*. Before giving the floor to speakers in explanation of vote before the vote, may I remind delegations that explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made from delegations from their seats.

Mr. Wittig (Germany): Some 884 million people worldwide lack access to safe drinking water, and over 2.6 million people do not have access to basic sanitation. Every year, around 2 million people die from diseases caused by unsafe water and sanitation — most of them small children.

Germany is committed to the realization of the Millennium Development Goals, including that of reducing by half by 2015 the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water and sanitation. Germany is one of the main proponents of the right to access to safe drinking water and sanitation. We consider access to safe drinking water and sanitation to be a component of the right to an adequate standard of living recognized in article 11 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, alongside food, housing and others. This is the reason why we took the initiative, together with Spain, to create the mandate of an independent expert on human rights obligations related to access to safe drinking water and sanitation in the Human Rights Council in Geneva. And this is the reason why we shall vote in favour today.

We regret that consensus on this text could not be achieved and that a vote has been called for, thus introducing an element of division on a very important issue. Some Member States have also voiced concern about the possible effect of the draft resolution on the Geneva process. We do not share this assessment, but see the draft resolution rather as a complement to the ongoing important process on water and sanitation in Geneva.

The text of the draft resolution before us is a compromise. We would have appreciated it if the resolution had taken into account more of the proposals made by the European Union during the negotiations. We would have appreciated a clearer message on the primary responsibility of States to ensure the realization of human rights for all those living under their jurisdiction, complemented, if needed, by external support coming from the region or other parts of the world.

However, the draft resolution contains an important recognition of the ongoing process on water and sanitation in the Human Rights Council in Geneva and the work of the independent expert in particular. The draft resolution encourages her to continue working on her mandate to clarify the content of the human rights obligations related to access to safe drinking water and sanitation.

We also welcome the flexibility of Bolivia, as the main sponsor, to meet the concern of some Member States, including Germany, on paragraph 1.

To conclude, Germany invites delegations to continue to actively support and participate in the Geneva process in order to understand the full human rights dimension of access to safe drinking water and sanitation and the obligations linked to the provision and protection of both. Germany engages itself to continue this process in the open, transparent and inclusive way that has marked the mandate since its inception.

Mr. Oyarzun (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): Spain would have wished that the suggestions and alternative texts presented by the European Union, first by Spain as a rotating President of the European Union and then by the current Belgian Presidency, had been taken into account by the delegation of Bolivia. In this respect, Spain regrets the fact that, first of all, almost none of these suggestions have been included in the final text of the draft resolution and that, predictably, we will not achieve a consensual adoption of the draft resolution. A consensus is crucial if there is to be an effective guarantee of any initiative that the United Nations may carry out with respect to human rights.

In particular, I would like to refer now to paragraph 1 of the draft resolution. In this regard, Spain welcomes the oral revision presented by Bolivia whereby the word "declares" would be replaced by the word "recognizes". This amendment introduced by Bolivia, which we highly welcome, creates a stronger link between the draft resolution and the work of the independent expert, whose ultimate objective is to

conclude that this right exists and to invest it with substance.

In any case, Spain would like to give an explicit interpretation of the content of paragraph 1. For Spain, as for Germany, water and sanitation are two components of the right to an adequate standard of living, recognized in article 11 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. In this respect, my delegation firmly supports the content of General Comment No. 15 of the Committee for Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the report on this matter presented by the independent expert, Ms. De Albuquerque, to the Human Rights Council in September 2009 concerning the human rights obligations related to access to sanitation (A/HRC/12/24).

Spain regrets in particular that the proposal to include a paragraph 1 bis that would expressly reference the work of the independent expert on this matter has not been taken into consideration.

With respect to paragraph 2, Spain would like to clarify that its wording creates open confusion by not pointing out, as the sixth preambular paragraph does, that the responsibility to promote and protect all human rights falls upon States themselves.

Despite that, Spain acknowledges the important role that is played by technical assistance and cooperation for development in helping developing countries improve access to drinking water and sanitation for their populations. We should recall that Spain has, in the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, a water and sanitation fund for Latin America, of which Bolivia is the second greatest beneficiary.

Having said this, the delegation of Spain would like to announce that we will vote in favour of the draft resolution.

Mrs. Horváth Fekszi (Hungary): Hungary attaches great importance to access to safe drinking water and sanitation, which is closely connected to the realization of such fundamental rights as the right to life and human dignity. We consider access to safe drinking water and sanitation to be a component of the right to an adequate standard of living. Those are the main reasons why we shall vote in favour of the draft resolution, despite the concerns we have regarding the text and the way it was negotiated.

I wish to emphasize that Hungary fully supports the mandate of the Independent Expert on the issue of human rights obligations related to access to safe drinking water and sanitation, which was established in March 2008 by the Human Rights Council. We are convinced that the process initiated in Geneva by two States members of the European Union should be the one to clarify the content of human rights obligations related to access to safe drinking water and sanitation. We are determined to support the Independent Expert in her endeavours.

For the aforementioned reasons we deem it unfortunate for the General Assembly to declare a human right to water and sanitation, since in our view the draft resolution before us prejudges the outcome of the Geneva process. We are convinced that the overall aims of the Geneva process would be better served if this draft resolution were adopted by consensus. We would also have appreciated it had proposals by interested delegations, including those of the European Union, been more positively considered. We regret that the text as it stands provokes division among Member States, in spite of the fact that we are all aware of the importance of access to safe drinking water and sanitation. We firmly believe that this text could have been further improved and that it could have been the object of consensus.

Before I conclude, allow me to reiterate the important role of the Geneva process and to encourage all Member States to participate in it actively and constructively.

Mr. Sammis (United States of America): The United States is deeply committed to finding solutions to our world's water challenges. We support the goal of universal access to safe drinking water. Water and sanitation issues will also be an important focus at September's Millennium Development Goal summit. The United States is committed to working with our development partners to build on the progress they have already made in these areas as part of their national development strategies.

Water is essential for all life on Earth. Accordingly, safe and accessible water supplies further the realization of certain human rights, and there are human rights obligations related to access to safe drinking water and sanitation.

The United States supports the work of the Human Rights Council's Independent Expert on the

issue of human rights obligations related to access to safe drinking water and sanitation. In fact, we joined in sponsoring Human Rights Council resolution 12/8, on human rights and access to safe drinking water and sanitation, last September in Geneva. We look forward to receiving the next report of the Independent Expert. We also look forward to a more inclusive, considered and deliberative approach to these vital issues in Geneva than we have unfortunately experienced on draft resolution A/64/L.63/Rev.1* in New York.

Let me add that these concerns are not alleviated by the fact that just this morning we have seen a revision made, from the floor, to what the lead sponsor viewed as the core operative paragraph of the draft resolution. This, again, is an imposition on all of us who have not had sufficient time to really consider the implications of this. I think that it would have been far better, under the circumstances, not to bring this draft resolution forward for action today.

The United States had hoped to negotiate and ultimately join consensus on a text that would uphold and support the international process under way at the Human Rights Council. Instead, we have here a draft resolution that falls far short of enjoying the unanimous support of Member States and that may even undermine the work under way in Geneva. This draft resolution describes a right to water and sanitation in a way that is not reflective of existing international law, as there is no right to water and sanitation in an international legal sense as described by the draft resolution.

The United States regrets that this draft resolution diverts us from the serious international efforts under way to promote greater coordination and cooperation on water and sanitation issues. The draft resolution attempts to take a short cut around the serious work of formulating, articulating and upholding universal rights. It was not drafted in a transparent, inclusive manner, and the legal implications of a declared right to water have not yet been carefully and fully considered in this body or in Geneva.

For those reasons, the United States has called for a vote on this draft resolution and will abstain.

Mrs. Dunlop (Brazil): Brazil recognizes the human right to water and sanitation as a right that is intrinsically connected to the realization of the rights to life, to physical integrity, to health, to food and to adequate housing. It is the responsibility of States to guarantee those rights to their citizens. We consider that the human right to water and sanitation is compatible with the principle of the sovereign right of States to use their own water resources, as reflected in the 1992 Rio Declaration on Environment and Development.

Brazil has been developing technical cooperation projects aiming at promotion of access to water in countries where water resources are scarce, focusing in particular on low-income communities. Brazil supports the efforts of Catarina de Albuquerque, the Independent Expert on the issue of human rights obligations related to access to safe drinking water and sanitation, aimed at clarifying the nature and content of the obligations associated with the right to water and sanitation.

We would like to recall that the treaty-based and non-treaty-based bodies of the United Nations human rights system are based in Geneva. For that reason, the Human Rights Council is the appropriate forum for discussion of this subject in a more objective and better-informed manner. But Brazil today will support draft resolution A/64/L.63/Rev.1*.

Mr. Şen (Turkey): My delegation wishes to explain its vote before the vote on draft resolution A/64/L.63/Rev.1*. On 28 March 2008 the Human Rights Council adopted by consensus its resolution 7/22, entitled "Human rights and access to safe drinking water and sanitation", in which the Council established the mandate of the Independent Expert on the issue of human rights obligations related to access to safe drinking water and sanitation. On 1 October 2009, the Council adopted by consensus a second resolution, Human Rights Council resolution 12/8, on the same subject. The Independent Expert has been working on the issue of the human rights obligations of States related to access to safe drinking water and sanitation. The issue is before the Human Rights Council, and there is an ongoing process. Therefore, that Council should have been allowed to continue its work on this important, but also complex, issue.

The draft resolution before us prejudges the outcome of the ongoing work of the Council and prevents its further deliberations.

In view of what I have said, Turkey will abstain in the voting on draft resolution A/64/L.63/Rev.1*, entitled "The human right to water and sanitation".

The Acting President: We have heard the last speaker in explanation of vote before the voting.

The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/64/L.63/Rev.1*, entitled "The human right to water and sanitation", as orally revised. A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Finland, France, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Grenada, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Italy, Jamaica, Jordan, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Myanmar, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Portugal, Qatar, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Seychelles, Singapore, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tunisia, Tuvalu, United Arab Emirates, Uruguay, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zimbabwe

Against:

None

Abstaining:

Armenia, Australia, Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Ethiopia, Greece, Guyana, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Latvia, Lesotho, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, New Zealand, Poland, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Slovakia, Sweden, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Zambia

Draft resolution A/64/L.63/Rev.1, as orally revised, was adopted by 122 votes to none, with 41 abstentions* (resolution 64/292).

[Subsequently, the delegations of Belize and the Philippines advised the Secretariat that they had intended to vote in favour; the delegation of Albania advised the Secretariat that it had intended to abstain.]

The Acting President: Before giving the floor to those representatives who wish to speak in explanation of vote on the resolution just adopted, may I remind members that explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mrs. Bianchi (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): Argentina supports the progressive development of international human rights law, taking into account the fact that the main international human rights treaties in the areas of civil and political rights and of economic, social and cultural rights have become important pillars of the Argentinean legal order, having been raised to the constitutional level through the reform of the national Constitution in 1994. In this context, the importance of access to drinking water and basic sanitation services to protect human health and the environment have been recognized by many international documents that enjoy the support of Argentina.

Similarly, Argentina understands that it is one of the main responsibilities of States to guarantee its inhabitants the right to water as a fundamental aspect of guaranteeing the right to life and ensuring an adequate standard of living. As a consequence of that position, Argentina voted in favour of resolution 64/292. Nonetheless, Argentina maintains that the right to water and sanitation is a human right that every State must ensure for the individuals within its jurisdiction and not with respect to other States.

Mr. Løvold (Norway): Norway gives high priority to the right to water and sanitation, and we voted in favour of resolution 64/292. In General Comment No. 15 (2002) on the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, it is stated that ensuring that everyone has access to adequate sanitation is not only fundamental to human rights, but is one of the principal mechanisms for protecting the quality of drinking water supplies and resources. Furthermore, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights explains that measures to prevent, treat and control diseases linked to water, in particular ensuring access to adequate sanitation, are part of the core obligations under the right to water.

Norway regards the right to water and sanitation as being among the fundamental rights already recognized in existing human rights norms, such as the right to the possible highest standard of physical and mental health, the right to an adequate standard of living and the right to life. However, Norway regrets that it was not possible to achieve consensus on resolution 64/292 and the split this resolution has created. Nevertheless, we hope that this situation will not have a negative impact on the process on the issue in the Human Rights Council in Geneva and the future work of the Special Rapporteur.

Mr. Rosenthal (Guatemala) (*spoke in Spanish*): Guatemala welcomes the efforts made by the delegation of the Plurinational State of Bolivia and the other sponsors of resolution 64/292, as well as the flexibility shown even at the very last minute to come up with a text acceptable to the majority of countries. As a result, Guatemala would have preferred that the resolution be adopted by consensus, but we decided to vote in favour because we agree with its essence, if not with all of its specific content.

At the same time, we voted in favour of the resolution on the understanding that our recognition of the right to drinking water and sanitation is in accordance with our existing national legislation guaranteeing the effective management and governance of waters as goods and services in the aim of contributing to the maintenance of essential ecological processes, access to a safe and secure environment, economic growth, compliance with the Millennium Development Goals, and improved quality of life for the present and future generations of the people living on our national territory. Similarly, Guatemala understands that the adoption of resolution 64/292 will create no international or inter-State right or obligation.

Mr. Edrees (Egypt): I take the floor in explanation of vote on resolution 64/292, entitled "The human right to water and sanitation", just adopted as orally revised.

Egypt believes that all human rights are universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated, and must be treated globally in a fair and equal manner, on the same footing and with the same emphasis. In this light, Egypt voted in favour of the resolution, which focuses on the right to access to safe and clean drinking water and sanitation, based on the understanding that it does not create new rights or sub-categories of human rights different from those stipulated in the internationally agreed human rights instruments.

Egypt appreciates the dedication of the Plurinational State of Bolivia to this noble cause, and welcomes the efforts of the sponsors to take on board our major concerns. We also welcome the fact that the provisions of the resolution deal solely with this important issue, despite the shorter title, which we had sincerely hoped the sponsors would streamline to reflect the focus on the right to access to safe and clean drinking water and sanitation, in line with the provisions of the resolution itself.

Egypt believes that guaranteeing the full enjoyment of this basic human right is the obligation of all States towards all their citizens — a matter that reaffirms the need to concentrate on local and national perspectives in considering the issue at hand. This is surely dependent on the varying capacities of States, and as such is not expected in many instances to be achieved overnight or without the international cooperation necessary to support efforts to provide safe, clean, accessible and affordable drinking water and sanitation to all, particularly in developing countries.

We acknowledge the need, highlighted by many delegations during the course of the negotiations, to set aside controversial questions of international watercourse law and transboundary water. Egypt regrets that the resolution on this important issue was put to the vote, and is mindful that certain aspects of human rights obligations related to access to safe drinking water and sanitations have yet to be further studied, as pointed out in the report of the United

Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the scope and content of the relevant human rights obligations related to equitable access to safe drinking water and sanitation under international human rights instruments (A/HRC/6/3).

However, we trust that the resolution will bring these issues to the forefront and provide added impetus to the efforts under way in Geneva to resolve them so as to achieve consensus in the near future.

Ms. Cavanagh (New Zealand): New Zealand takes this opportunity to explain its abstention in the voting on resolution 64/292.

New Zealand fully appreciates the importance of clean water and sanitation to development and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. We recognize that safe drinking water and sanitation are essential to good health. We wish to see progress in this area. However, we are concerned that the resolution was introduced before New Zealand and others had an adequate opportunity to fully consider its implications in terms of both our domestic and our international obligations.

We support the work of the Human Rights Council, and in particular of the independent expert, to clarify the content of human rights obligations related to access to safe drinking water and sanitation. New Zealand believes that the work of the independent expert raises issues that require further consideration by States.

Mr. Errázuriz (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): The delegation of Chile voted in favour of resolution 64/292, introduced by the delegation of the Plurinational State of Bolivia. We recognize the importance of drinking water and sanitation to human dignity and believe that the aim of the resolution is to promote compliance with the Millennium Development Goals with respect to water and sanitation.

In that regard, we understand that the resolution does not determine or prejudge the way in which States decide to administer water and sanitation, which are regulated by domestic legislation. Similarly, we interpret the recognition of the right to drinking water and sanitation strictly in the context of efforts to promote access to those vital resources, again subject to the domestic legislation of every State.

Mr. Goledzinowski (Australia): Access to water and sanitation is fundamental to the realization of a range of human rights. Globally, some two thirds of those without reliable access to clean water live in the Asia-Pacific region, and of our region's 3.8 billion people, over half do not have access to sanitation. Australia also acknowledges that access to water and sanitation is of critical importance to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. Therefore, Australia has increased development assistance for water and sanitation by $300 million in the past two years.

We appreciate the sincerity of the Plurinational State of Bolivia as the lead sponsor of resolution 64/292, and we respect Bolivia's commitment to this issue. Nevertheless, Australia has reservations about the process of declaring new human rights through a General Assembly resolution. In particular, we are concerned that the precise status and nature of such rights will be uncertain, and uncertainty makes consensus difficult. Of course, when we recognize new human rights, consensus is very important.

Australia supports the work of the independent expert on the issue of human rights obligations related to access to safe drinking water and sanitation. We have followed with interest the progress of the independent expert's work in clarifying the content of rights related to access to water and sanitation.

Resolution 64/292 has now been adopted, but we would have preferred that the independent expert had been allowed to finalize her work before the introduction of a resolution so that her work on this subject could have been fully taken into account by the General Assembly.

Ms. Zamora (Costa Rica) (*spoke in Spanish*): Costa Rica joined the majority of the Members of our Organization with our vote in favour of resolution 64/292, but we would like to point out the reasons for our position and the procedural reservations that we still maintain.

In Costa Rica, access to water is an inalienable right and has been guaranteed as such by the Constitutional Court of the Supreme Court of Justice, which has also acknowledged the international developments in this area. As constitutional jurisprudence consistently indicates,

> "[t]he Court recognizes, as a part of the Constitutional Law, a fundamental right to drinking water, derived from the fundamental rights to health, life, the environment, food and

adequate housing, among others, as has been recognized as well in international instruments on human rights which are applicable to Costa Rica".

For our country, every State has the primary responsibility to guarantee its inhabitants access to water pursuant to the principle of social and intergenerational equity and solidarity. Costa Rica therefore supports the work on this issue being carried out in the Human Rights Council in Geneva, and in particular by the independent expert on the matter of human rights obligations related to access to water and sanitation. This process seeks to establish with greater clarity the content of human rights obligations, including the obligation to ensure non-discrimination with respect to access to drinking water and sanitation, specifically with the ultimate purpose of recognizing access to water and sanitation as a human right.

In this respect, my country would have liked to see more clearly reflected in the text of the resolution an acknowledgment of the work that is yet to be done to establish the content and scope of this right at the international level. Nevertheless, we understand that with the revision introduced, the resolution represents recognition by the General Assembly of the legal developments concerning this fundamental right in various international and national forums.

Costa Rica regrets the fact that this recognition was not adopted by consensus. The issue at hand is extremely important at a time when we are preparing to review the Millennium Development Goals. It is not advisable to stray from our goals; rather, we must devote ourselves to speeding up the implementation of the Goals related to access to water and sanitation and to carry the process begun in Geneva to a successful conclusion.

Mr. Ntwaagae (Botswana): I thank you, Sir, for giving me the floor to explain my delegation's position on resolution 64/292, which the Assembly has just adopted.

Though we fully recognize the importance of the provision of water and sanitation infrastructure in the context of the Millennium Development Goals, we regret that we were unable support the resolution in its present form. Botswana also regrets that such a vital resolution should have been subjected to a vote instead of being adopted by consensus. My delegation feels strongly that sufficient time should have been allowed for consultations and for the ongoing process in Geneva, under the auspices of the Human Rights Council, to take its full course. We also feel that the intended objectives of the resolution could be achieved through many ongoing multilateral initiatives, including the International Decade for Action, "Water for Life".

In Botswana, water is a precious natural resource. We are a country that has a semi-arid climate; we have highly unreliable rainfall; we experience recurrent droughts and high rates of evaporation due to extreme temperatures. Just to demonstrate the extent to which we attach importance to water, we have named our national currency "pula", which literally means "let there be rain". This is an expression which is also used as a form of national greeting or to signal public approval or consent.

Over the years, the provision of water in Botswana has been of utmost national priority. This is reflected in the consistently high rates of budget allocations for water and sanitation over the successive periods of our national development plan. It is on this account that my delegation abstained in the voting on this otherwise vital resolution.

Ms. Freedman (United Kingdom): The United Kingdom abstained in the voting on resolution 64/292 today for reasons of both substance and procedure. On substance, the United Kingdom does not believe that there exists at present sufficient legal basis under international law to either declare or recognize water or sanitation as free-standing human rights. Neither a right to water nor a right to sanitation has been agreed upon in any United Nations human rights treaty, nor is there evidence that they exist in customary international law.

The United Kingdom does believe that there is a right to water as an element of the right of everyone to an adequate standard of living. We also believe that inadequate sanitation has a negative impact on the protection of human rights, such as the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health.

On procedure, we are disappointed that this resolution cuts across and pre-empts the work under way in the Human Rights Council in Geneva on this very subject. We supported the Council's resolutions 7/22, which established the post of independent expert on the issue of human rights obligations related to

access to safe drinking water and sanitation, and 12/8 on human rights and access to safe drinking water and sanitation of October 2009. In view of the complexities of the issue at stake, the work in Geneva has been progressing in a careful and consensual manner, and it is unfortunate that this initiative today has pre-empted the outcome of this work.

The United Kingdom is very concerned about the impact that inadequate access to water and poor sanitation has on the full enjoyment of human rights. Furthermore, sanitation and drinking water underpin all aspects of human and economic development. If current trends continue, it is estimated that the Millennium Development Goal on sanitation may not be met globally until 2049. The United Kingdom takes this extremely seriously. We place a very high priority on providing the poorest people in the world with clean water and sanitation as part of achieving the Millennium Development Goals. Since March 2008, our bilateral programmes have delivered safe water to 2.7 million people in Africa and 3.1 million in South Asia and have helped 1.8 million people in Africa and 25.5 million people in South Asia gain access to basic sanitation. We are also actively striving, through our support to the Sanitation and Water for All initiative, to strengthen the global response in the sector, bringing together Governments, multilateral agencies and global civil society. We very much hope that September's summit on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) will provide much-needed attention and impetus to expedite progress on this and other related MDG targets. We simply regret that this initiative here today was not pursued with consensus in mind.

Mr. Suárez (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): Colombia attaches special importance to the progressive improvement of access to drinking water and basic sanitation services. Our constitution and laws, as well as our national courts, have established a significant legal framework regarding the delivery of these services. Colombia voted in favour of resolution 64/292; it considers that, in spirit and in scope, it is an aspirational political declaration that, as it is not binding, creates no legal obligations for a State that differ from those established in treaties and other human rights instruments to which a State subscribes. Hence, Colombia will interpret the scope of the resolution in accordance with its constitution, obligations assumed under human rights treaties we have ratified and with national laws related to the matters covered in the resolution.

My delegation wishes also to make the following points. First, Colombia agrees with delegations that have expressed concern over the effect of the submission and adoption by the Assembly of a resolution on a matter that has been the subject of careful study and consideration in the Human Rights Council, in particular considering the high level of technical expertise and conceptual discussion that has characterized that specialized body's consideration of this issue. In that regard, my delegation hopes that the processes under way in the Human Rights Council will continue, in line with the appropriate technical and legal approach.

Secondly, my country notes that we did not agree with certain aspects of the consultation process. During that process, Colombia presented — in a constructive spirit and in line with solid legal arguments — a number of proposals that do not appear to be reflected in the final text, even though we heard no opposition from other States. My country does not know why the sponsors did not accept our proposals, and we regret that the limited opportunity to discuss this very important issue led to a vote having been taken on today's resolution, which sets an unfortunate precedent on international matters related to human rights and the internationally agreed development goals.

As to the content of the resolution, we note that the content of operative paragraph 1 does not clearly identify the basic components of the concept of the right to drinking water and sanitation. For instance, it does not define the scope of the right to drinking water and sanitation in terms including the uses to which the water will be put, the definition of its characteristics and the identification of the modalities or beneficiaries of services that would be covered under this right. Nor does it make reference to aspects of this right that should enjoy immediate protection, such as non-discrimination in access, as compared with those that should be promoted progressively, such as public services and various social rights.

Hence, we reaffirm that States should interpret the elements and characteristics of the right to drinking water and sanitation in conformity with obligations established in human rights instruments they have ratified and their various constitutional regimes, national legislation and relevant jurisprudence.

Moreover, we note that paragraph 1 defines the right to water and sanitation as "essential for the full enjoyment of life and all human rights". Here, it is Colombia's interpretation that the General Assembly's intention was to recognize the right to water and sanitation as a right derived from or viewed in connection with other rights, because the definition emphasizes its nature as an essential component in the enjoyment of the right to life and other rights.

Colombia's political constitution does not explicitly refer to the right to drinking water and sanitation. But the jurisprudence applied by our constitutional court in particular cases indicates that the right to water is a fundamental right only as it the water is for human consumption in connection with the enjoyment of the right to life in conditions of dignity and the right to health. That court has indicated too that the right to water is not protected when the water is intended for other activities on which human life, health or welfare do not depend. In its decisions, the court specified instances in which protection must be required of public authorities and individuals as regards proper, efficient and timely delivery of public sanitation services.

It is Colombia's understanding that the provision of drinking water and environmental sanitation services is among the services for which the State is responsible. Under our system, it is the State's duty to ensure the efficient delivery of public services to all of the country's inhabitants, taking account of the fact that such public services are subject to a legal regime established through legislation and that the State can deliver them either directly or indirectly through organized communities or through individuals. In all cases, it falls to the State to regulate, control and monitor these services.

Having said that, my delegation thanks the delegation of Bolivia for its initiative to bring this item to the General Assembly for discussion.

Mr. Gonnet (France) (*spoke in French*): France regrets that the Assembly was unable to adopt resolution 64/292, on the basic right to water and sanitation, by consensus. We welcome the progress made through the adoption of this text, with its recognition that the right to access to drinking water and sanitation is a universal right. We hope that the work under way in the Human Rights Council in Geneva will continue so that this right can be fully implemented.

France calls upon the international community to come together on this issue during the ongoing consideration of the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals, in particular during the September summit, and in the framework of the preparations for the sixth World Water Forum, to be held at Marseilles in March 2012.

Ms. Fujimoto (Japan): Japan appreciates the initiative that the Bolivian Government has taken, but it regrets that the right to safe and clean drinking water and sanitation was recognized through a vote. Japan knows that this is a profoundly important issue: since the 1990s Japan has been the world's largest donor in the water and sanitation sector. And Japan knows that the Human Rights Council has been considering this issue since 2006, as it has actively participated in the discussions in that body. Furthermore, Japan was among the sponsors of the Human Rights Council resolution on human rights and access to safe drinking water and sanitation.

But my delegation believes that such an important issue should be resolved by consensus, not a vote. It therefore deeply regrets that we did not have an exhaustive discussion on this right in order to reach consensus before action was taken. It is for that reason that Japan abstained in the vote on resolution 64/292.

My delegation will continue to engage in this discussion both in Geneva and in New York in order to reach consensus, and will continue to support the work of the Independent Expert on the issue of human rights obligations related to access to safe drinking water and sanitation. In this and other ways, my Government will spare no effort to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, including water and sanitation targets, in countries in need.

Mr. Lukiyantsev (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The delegation of the Russian Federation voted in favour of resolution 64/292, prepared by the delegation of Bolivia and other delegations, on the human right to water and sanitation. We believe that this document raises important problems, in particular in light of the summit on the Millennium Development Goals to be held in September. We view it as a complement to the discussions under way in Geneva. At the same time, we draw attention to some shortcomings in the conceptual drafting of this right,

and we call on other States, regardless of the positions they took today, to continue discussions on this topic.

Mr. Gutiérrez (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): With respect to resolution 64/292 on the human right to water and sanitation that we have just adopted, I should like to make the following remarks on behalf of my country. Peru voted in favour of the resolution in the understanding that the guaranteed enjoyment of this right is subject to existing domestic legislation, spatial planning and the allocation of resources allowing for the exercise of this right.

Ms. Kok (Singapore): I have the honour to make this statement in explanation of vote after the voting. Singapore is a small island State with no natural resources, including water. Nonetheless, we cater to the needs of our population through a combination of means and mechanisms for the reliable delivery of this crucial resource. We thus support efforts to provide access to safe and clean drinking water and sanitation. This is the basis of our vote in favour of resolution 64/292.

At the same time, we believe that several issues need to be worked out with respect to this right — a process that can also proceed through the ongoing discussions in Geneva. For instance, clear definitions and the scope of Member States' obligations should be clarified. My delegation stands ready to contribute constructively in discussions.

Mr. De Bassompierre (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): Belgium voted in favour of resolution 64/292 because we recognize the fundamental principle of the right of access to water, which is enshrined in our national and regional legislation.

Belgium appreciates the sincerity of Bolivia and other sponsors in submitting this resolution. However, we regret the process by which it was developed, which did not favour the achievement of consensus on this key issue.

We fully support the mandate of the independent expert and the process under way in Geneva. Belgium also regrets that some important suggestions made by the European Union during the negotiations were not taken into account in the final text of the resolution. In particular, we express our reservations with respect to paragraph 2. Without wishing to minimize the role of the international cooperation in this area, which is an explicit priority of Belgium's cooperation and development policy, we underscore that the implementation of this right is above all the responsibility of individual States.

Mr. Tarar (Pakistan): I take the floor to give an explanation of vote after the voting on resolution 64/292. Pakistan voted in favour of the resolution.

We wish to reaffirm that States have the responsibility to ensure access to safe and clean drinking water and sanitation for its nationals. However, we should like to draw attention to practical limitations in achieving the ideals aimed at in resolution 64/292. These could only be progressively achieved by taking into account the particular context of developing countries like Pakistan vis-à-vis capacity limitations, financial limitations and access to natural resources.

Mr. De Klerk (Netherlands): The Netherlands abstained in the voting on the Bolivian resolution on the human right to water and sanitation, and I should like to explain our position.

The Netherlands recognized access to clean, affordable drinking water and adequate sanitation as a human right in 2008. The Netherlands attaches great importance to this human right. This is also reflected in our overall development efforts and in our output target for water and sanitation, which was formulated in 2005. The target is for Dutch assistance to help to provide safe water and improved sanitation to 50 million people by 2015. We are also a major donor to UNICEF's programme for water, sanitation and hygiene.

To ensure that priority is given to water and sanitation in the international debate, the Netherlands supports the Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Water and Sanitation. The Board has been instrumental in, for instance, promoting the International Year of Sanitation and in developing the Sanitation and Water for All initiative, which is an alliance of national Governments, donors, civil society organizations and other development partners that tries to increase political will and improve aid effectiveness by mobilizing and better targeting resources for water supply and sanitation.

Unfortunately, notwithstanding our support for water issues, the Netherlands was not in a position to vote in favour of resolution 64/292 for a number of reasons. First of all, the resolution puts insufficient

emphasis on the responsibility of Governments towards their own citizens to move progressively and as quickly as possible towards the full realization of the right to water and sanitation for everyone, with special attention to individuals and groups who have traditionally faced difficulties. If Governments fail to do so, citizens must be able to claim this right and hold the duty-bearers accountable. Resolution 64/292 neither encourages States to take this responsibility nor calls for redress mechanisms.

Secondly, the resolution refers to the work of the independent expert mandated by the Human Rights Council. The Netherlands considers it very important that her report (A/HRC/12/24) be used as input for further discussion during the Millennium Development Goals summit. Requesting the independent expert to do additional work at this stage, for which she is not mandated by the Human Rights Council, will infringe on her present mandate, which aims at inclusiveness and consensus. A new request from the General Assembly to the independent expert will not really benefit consensus on or the realization of the relevant human rights.

Thirdly, we firmly believe in the right to access to clean, affordable drinking water and good sanitation, and we underline that this right should be recognized as such. However, we are not happy with the ad hoc declaration of human rights by the General Assembly, even though we noted and appreciated the oral revision just introduced.

Finally, the resolution contains elements that unnecessarily politicize this important theme.

In conclusion, I should like to reiterate that the Netherlands acknowledges the importance of access to drinking water and good sanitation, and I should like to underline our willingness to support Governments in fulfilling their international obligations through development assistance. National development policies can be a starting point for turning human rights into plans and action.

Ms. Rovirosa (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): Mexico voted in favour of resolution 64/292 as we believe that access to safe drinking water and sanitation is a matter of high priority and we share the spirit of the text presented by Bolivia and the other sponsors.

Mexico recognizes that access to safe drinking water and sanitation are part and parcel of the human right to an adequate standard of living and of the right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, as established, respectively, in article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and articles 11 and 12 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. That is how we interpret the content of paragraph 1 of the resolution just adopted by the Assembly.

In Mexico, article 27 of our Constitution establishes the modalities for ownership of the land and water within the boundaries of our national territory. Mexico will continue to make every effort necessary to adopt progressive measures and, within the limits of our resources, to provide water and sanitation to that part of our population that does not have such services, as established in our national legislation in compliance with our applicable international obligations and in line with the Millennium Development Goals.

Mexico believes that it is up to national legal systems to enhance equitable access to drinking water and basic sanitation. The resolution must therefore be implemented nationally and in accordance with the applicable national legislation of every country.

Lastly, we believe that we must continue the in-depth discussion on this matter in a constructive manner and consistent with the processes under way in the Human Rights Council, which is the appropriate forum in which to move forward with this very important issue.

Mr. Feleke (Ethiopia): My delegation abstained in the voting on this resolution on the human right to water and sanitation, but not because Ethiopia believes that access to water for all human beings is neither a noble idea nor their natural right.

However, although the delegation of Ethiopia requested the inclusion of a paragraph taken from the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development of June 1992 —

> "[Reaffirming that] States have, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and the principles of international law, the sovereign right to exploit their own resources pursuant to their own environment and

development policies, and the responsibility to ensure that activities within their jurisdiction or control do not cause damage to the environment of other States or of areas beyond the limits of national jurisdiction."

— this was not considered during the consultations, and Ethiopia had to take this position today.

The Government of Ethiopia is of the view that the aforementioned paragraph should have been included in the resolution, as it reaffirms the sovereign right of all States to their own resources, which is consistent with the Charter of the United Nations and the principles of international law. We strongly believe that the right to water and sanitation cannot be seen in isolation, particularly without taking into account, in the first place, the rights of resource-poor countries, which deserve new consideration when negotiating the right or access to water or other related issues.

Mr. Normandin (Canada): By way of introduction, let me first say that Canada fully appreciates the vital importance of water for all, and this is why Canada supports countless initiatives around the world to ensure that people have access to safe drinking water and sanitation. This being said, with respect to the resolution we have just adopted, let me offer the following explanation of vote.

Canada takes its human rights obligations seriously, and before agreeing to be bound by new international obligations, Canada must ensure that it can meet those obligations domestically. During the period when Canada was a member of the Human Rights Council, we joined the consensus on resolution 7/22 of 2008, which established the mandate of the independent expert on the issue of human rights obligations related to access to safe drinking water and sanitation to further study the issue. The work of the independent expert was expected to serve as a basis for Member States to consider, debate and delineate the basis, scope and content of any right to water and sanitation.

It is premature to recognize such a right without allowing States the benefit of full deliberations based on the independent expert's findings, their own internal processes and the agreement of States. The current non-binding resolution would appear to declare that there is a right to safe and clean drinking water and sanitation as a human right, but does not set out the basis, scope or content of the right, or the concomitant obligations of States with regard to this right.

The Government of Canada is of the view that a general right to safe and clean drinking water and sanitation is not explicitly codified under international human rights law, and there is currently no international consensus among States regarding the basis, scope and content of a possible right to water. It is premature to declare such a human right in the absence of a clear international consensus, and the lack of international consensus is exemplified by the fact that a vote was called on this resolution.

Canada recognizes that there are important human rights related to access to safe drinking water as a component of existing rights, and Canada will continue to meet its obligations in this regard. For all these reasons, Canada abstained in the voting on this resolution.

Mr. Vigny (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): Switzerland supports the process aimed at promoting the right to water and access to sanitation for all, which we believe arises from the international instruments guaranteeing human rights. We would therefore like to send a positive signal to that end, which justifies our vote in favour although we were unhappy with the negotiating process for the text.

Indeed, we do not support a duplication of resolutions concerning water between the General Assembly and the Human Rights Council, as we believe that it weakens the consensus work under way in Geneva. Our hope is that, in the future, the countries that initiate these different resolutions will work together in a concerted fashion.

In addition, the negotiating process took place in a way that was not very constructive or transparent, thus preventing a consensus from being forged. Indeed, a number of countries, including Switzerland, proposed — unfortunately, to no avail — that paragraph 1 include a reference to international instruments that underpin the right to water and access to sanitation.

Switzerland also regrets that there is no reference in the resolution to the obligation of States to ensure enjoyment at the national level of the right to water and to promote access to sanitation.

Mr. Barriga (Liechtenstein): My delegation voted in favour of the resolution 64/292 because we agree with the central and general statement that the

right to water is a human right that is essential to the full enjoyment of life and all human rights. We do, however, regret that a vote had to be taken on this resolution, and we share the concerns about the process that others have expressed.

On substance, while we agree with the core message, we regret that the issue has been dealt with in a rather simplistic manner. To recognize the right to water and sanitation as a human right is in our view, in this context, nothing more and nothing less than an act of interpretation of existing human rights law. There is a limited number of human rights that are explicitly recognized in international treaties and customary law, and the right to water is not one of them. But these explicit rights do, of course, imply many more specific rights. This is also true for the right to water, even though its exact scope and content remain unclear in this resolution.

Most human rights are, furthermore, not absolute in nature and must be seen in the context of the law. This is particularly true for rights within the realm of economic and social rights, whose realization is, to some degree at least, subject to the availability of resources. Most importantly, the obligation to implement human rights falls first and foremost on each individual State. It is therefore our understanding that resolution 64/292 does not create any new right and that it must be seen in the context of wider human rights law.

Mr. Ndong Mba (Equatorial Guinea) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, the delegation of Equatorial Guinea congratulates Bolivia on its initiative. We welcome the adoption of resolution 64/292 and the fact that there was no vote against the resolution.

Let us picture a remote place where people have nothing and live without resources. If we go there and leave them without water, and then return after a while, we will find them in the same situation. However, if we leave them with water, the situation of the population of that remote place will certainly have improved greatly.

That is why I believe that the adoption of this resolution is very significant, given the importance that my country and Government attach to water. We believe that it is a question of national sovereignty and that countries are very aware of that. That is why our Government is carrying out a vast national programme to provide water to the population, an issue that played a very important role at the national economic conference. That is why we would like to thank Bolivia and the sponsors of the resolution, and are pleased to have voted in its favour.

Mr. Mutahar (Yemen) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to express my heartfelt condolences to the Government and people of Pakistan following this morning's airplane crash, which claimed 152 lives.

Yemen was a sponsor of resolution 64/292, entitled "The human right to water and sanitation". Given our belief that water is of great importance to human existence and life, since there can be no life at all on Earth without it, it is natural that access to water be considered a human right.

I will not parrot the representative of Bolivia's introduction of the resolution. Suffice it to note that during the first decade of this millennium, many reports have referred to the world water crisis. All of those publications have stressed that the shortage of water could be the greatest challenge of our time. I would simply reiterate the statement made by Maude Barlow — an expert in the field of water who received the 2005 Right Livelihood Award, known as the Alternative Nobel Prize, for her studies — to the effect that water will be the oil of the twenty-first century. This might even lead us to say that this is a time of thirst.

In conclusion, I would like to thank the members of the General Assembly who voted in favour of the resolution. We believe that this is a historic moment that represents a major step forward towards the September summit. We would have preferred, however, that the resolution be adopted by consensus.

Mr. Benítez Versón (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): The adoption of resolution 64/292 marks a historic moment. For the first time, the United Nations has recognized the right to drinking water and sanitation as an essential human right.

The issue of water is at the very core of the survival of humankind. While we deliver speeches in this Hall, more than 884 million people on our planet have no access to sources of improved drinking water and 2.6 billion, including almost 1 billion children, have no access to improved sanitation services. Worst still, if we do not act quickly and effectively, in 2025

more than 3 billion people will suffer the consequences of a lack of water.

Cuba, which achieved the Millennium Development Goal concerning the use of drinking water in 1995, believes that access to water and sanitation is a fundamental human right. In reaffirming the sovereign right of every country to regulate water and all its uses and services within its own territory, we believe it important for States to strive at all levels to implement this right for their inhabitants. Developing countries need the support of the international community in order to achieve these goals.

The internationalization of the problem of water makes it crucial for the United Nations to become the main forum for discussing and reaching agreements on water and sanitation. That is why Cuba welcomes today's adoption by the General Assembly, the universal representative body, of this important resolution by a wide a majority, following a lengthy negotiating process marked by transparency and inclusiveness. The text that we have adopted takes into account proposals made by various delegations and strikes a suitable balance. The resolution does not contradict or prejudge in any way, but rather complements and strengthens the discussion on the issue of water and sanitation that is currently under way in the Human Rights Council. The resolution allows us to focus effectively on the consequences and impact of the lack of drinking water and sanitation on the attainment the Millennium Development Goals.

In conclusion, I should like to convey the appreciation and gratitude of Cuba to the Plurinational State of Bolivia for its leadership in this area. That brotherly country took the initiative to promote a debate on this important matter in the General Assembly, and its tireless efforts were key to enabling the adoption of this historic resolution, which Cuba welcomes.

Mrs. Rubiales De Chamorro (Nicaragua) (*spoke in Spanish*): Nicaragua welcomes the adoption of resolution 64/292 today, which recognizes the human right to drinking water and sanitation as a human right essential to the full enjoyment of life. We welcome the adoption of this historic milestone, after more than 15 years of debate at the global level, thanks to the initiative of the brotherly people and Government of the Plurinational State of Bolivia, which also endeavoured, with a conciliatory spirit, to reconcile the positions of those countries that still find it difficult to recognize the human right to water.

The adoption of this resolution is all the more important in the light of the upcoming review of the status of implementation of the Millennium Development Goals.

Some 884 million people lack safe drinking water and more than 2.6 billion people do not have basic sanitation. Every year, approximately 1.5 million children under the age of five die, and 443 million school days are lost as a result of diseases linked to water and sanitation. We cannot continue to neglect this issue.

Access to water and sanitation is essential to the health and dignity of all people around in the world. This resolution has been adopted at a crucial moment as the world is also facing the impact of climate change. The insufficient and inadequate provision of safe drinking water represents an ongoing problem for the health of the world population. Some 80 per cent of all cases of disease in the developing world are caused by the lack of clean water and adequate sanitation, making it one of the leading causes of illness and death, especially among children.

Nicaragua thanks those Member States that, having grasped this reality, voted with us in favour of this historic resolution.

Mr. Escalona Ojeda (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, we wish to thank the Plurinational Republic of Bolivia for its initiative and its leadership. We should also like to thank all the States that have spoken in favour of resolution 64/292.

Today we have seized the opportunity to provide an adequate response to the 1.2 billion people who currently do not have access to safe drinking water and to the approximately 2.4 billion people who lack adequate sanitation services. We have also taken an important step to reduce the number of people, currently more than 3 million, who die each year from diseases kinked to the lack of safe drinking water.

In the process of negotiating the resolution, we considered the importance of valuing water as a source of life — and, indeed, as life itself. It is no coincidence that water constitutes two-thirds of our planet and that the same proportion can also be seen in the composition of the human body. Without water, life on

Earth would be impossible. That is why we reject all attempts to turn water into commodity, as bargaining with the life of humankind and of the planet could result in water, instead of nourishing peace, becoming an element of violence.

The international community must ensure the right to water of the millions of persons, the majority of whom are in developing countries, who lack safe drinking water and thereby ensure their right to life and to human dignity, based on the fact that access to water services is fundamental to the enforcement of the right to health and the prevention of countless diseases that primarily affect the poor. All forms of discrimination represent an attack on life, but discrimination based on setting market prices for access to water is not only economic discrimination, but a violation of the right to exist.

The right to water is fundamental to peace, democracy and a society free of disease and suffering.

Mr. Zeidan (Palestine): Palestine welcomes the adoption by the General Assembly today of the important resolution 64/292 on the human right to water and sanitation. We thank the sponsors and express our appreciation of the efforts of Ms. Catarina de Albuquerque, the United Nations independent expert on the issue of human rights obligations related to access to safe drinking water and sanitation, especially with regard to the further elaboration of standards.

Palestine affirms that the right to safe and clean drinking water and sanitation is a universal human right that is essential to the full enjoyment of the right to life and human dignity, and to which all peoples are entitled, including people living under foreign occupation. Palestine affirms its respect for the United Nations Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes and the relevant provisions of international humanitarian law and human rights law.

That water is a priority issue for Palestine is reflected in the fact that it is actually one of the core final status issues that must be justly and comprehensively resolved for a lasting resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. For Palestine, the scarcity of water has been compounded by the exploitation and diversion of water resources by Israel, the occupying Power, in addition to its contamination and destruction of water and sanitation systems during military assaults on the occupied Palestinian territory. Israel's illegal colonization by means of the wall and settlements in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, has also entailed the seizure and obstruction of access to aquifers, further reducing the water supply available to the Palestinian civilian population.

Israel's violation of the Palestinian people's right to water negatively impacts many other human rights, including their rights to food, to health, to livelihood and to development. A brief glimpse at the many troubling statistics in this regard reveal that the Palestinian people are allotted only 10 per cent of the water extracted from their own land and that they must actually purchase from Israel water that has been exploited from the Palestinian territory. In the Gaza Strip, only 5 to 10 per cent of water resources are of drinkable quality, with the remaining 90 per cent unfit for human consumption due to sewage and seawater infiltration. Daily per-person water consumption falls below World Health Organization minimum guidelines. Israel continues to hamper Palestinian development of essential water and sanitation infrastructure to this day. Today, Palestine reiterates its call on Israel to comply with its obligation to respect the right to water, in addition to the need for its compliance with all of its other obligations under international law.

Palestine looks forward to the implementation of resolution 64/292, including the call for assistance to help countries in need to gain the capacity and technology to provide safe, clean, accessible and affordable water and sanitation for all.

The Acting President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 48.

The meeting rose at 12.20 p.m.

United Nations A/64/PV.109

General Assembly

Sixty-fourth session

Official Records

109th plenary meeting
Friday, 30 July 2010, 3 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Ali Abdussalam Treki ..... (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Christian (Ghana), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

Agenda item 7 *(continued)*

Organization of work, adoption of agenda and allocation of items

The Acting President: The General Assembly will now turn to a note by the Secretary-General contained in document A/64/101/Add.2, under sub-item (a) of agenda item 112, concerning the appointment of a member of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions. Members will recall that the General Assembly concluded consideration of sub-item (a) of agenda item 112 at its 75th plenary meeting, on 16 March 2010.

In order for the General Assembly to consider the note of the Secretary-General, it will be necessary first to reopen its consideration of sub-item (a) of agenda item 112.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to reopen its consideration of sub-item (a) of agenda item 112?

It was so decided.

The Acting President: Representatives will also recall that at its 2nd plenary meeting, on 18 September 2009, the General Assembly allocated this sub-item to the Fifth Committee. In order for the Assembly to proceed expeditiously on this sub-item, may I take it that the Assembly agrees to consider this sub-item directly in plenary meeting?

It was so decided.

The Acting President: May I further take it that the Assembly agrees to proceed immediately to the consideration of sub-item (a) of agenda item 112?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 112 *(continued)*

Appointments to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other appointments

(a) Appointment of members of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

Note by the Secretary-General (A/64/101/Add.2)

The Acting President: In his note, the Secretary-General informs the General Assembly that he has received notification of the resignation of Ms. Misako Kaji of Japan from the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, effective 1 August 2010. The Assembly will therefore be required to appoint, at its current session, a person to fill the vacancy for the remaining period of the term of office of Ms. Kaji, which expires on 31 December 2010.

The Secretary-General also informs the General Assembly that the Government of Japan has nominated Mr. Akira Sugiyama to fill the vacancy arising from the resignation of Ms. Kaji. The note further states that the

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-506. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

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Secretariat has been informed by the Chair of the Group of Asian States that the candidature of Mr. Sugiyama has been endorsed by the Group.

May I therefore take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to appoint Mr. Akira Sugiyama as a member of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions for a term of office beginning on 1 August 2010 and ending on 31 December 2010?

It was so decided.

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (a) of agenda item 112?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 104 (*continued*)

Crime prevention and criminal justice

Draft resolution (A/64/L.64)

The Acting President: Members will recall that the General Assembly held the special high-level meeting on Transnational Organized Crime, under agenda item 104, in June 2010.

I should like to consult the Assembly with a view to proceeding immediately to consider the draft resolution contained in document A/64/L.64. In this connection, since the draft resolution has only been circulated today, it would be necessary to waive the relevant provision of rule 78 of the rules of procedure, which reads as follows:

> "As a general rule, no proposal shall be discussed or put to the vote at any meeting of the General Assembly unless copies of it have been circulated to all delegations not later than the day preceding the meeting."

Unless I hear any objections, I shall take it that the Assembly agrees with this proposal.

It was so decided.

The Acting President: Before proceeding further, I should like to inform members of the following correction to draft resolution A/64/L.64. In paragraph 4, the reference to "paragraph 36 of the annex of the present resolution" should be changed to read "paragraph 38 of the present resolution".

We shall now proceed to consider draft resolution A/64/L.64, as orally corrected.

In connection with draft resolution A/64/L.64, as orally corrected, I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Zhang Saijin (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): In connection with draft resolution A/64/L.64, entitled "United Nations Global Plan of Action against Trafficking in Persons", I wish to put on record the following statement on financial implications on behalf of the Secretary-General in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly.

By paragraphs 2, 4, 5, 6 and 7 of draft resolution A/64/L.64, the General Assembly would decide to formally launch the Plan of Action in a one-day high-level meeting of the General Assembly and urge Member States, the United Nations and other international, regional and subregional organizations, as well as civil society, including non-governmental organizations, the private sector and media, to fully and effectively implement the relevant provisions of the Plan of Action and the activities outlined therein.

The Assembly would decide to establish, in accordance with paragraph 38 of the annex to the draft resolution, the United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund for Victims of Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children; and request the Secretary-General to take all necessary measures for its effective operation, and acknowledge previous and ongoing contributions to other funding sources that support efforts to combat trafficking in persons. It would request the Secretary-General to include a section on the implementation by the United Nations system of the Plan of Action, within already existing reporting obligations to the General Assembly under the item on crime prevention and criminal justice.

The Assembly would decide to appraise in 2013 the progress achieved in the implementation of the Plan of Action and request the Secretary-General to take all necessary measures in that regard. It would request the Secretary-General to present proposals to finance the staffing and programmatic requirements of the Secretariat necessary to strengthen the capacity of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) as described in the Plan of Action through a reallocation of resources in the context of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2012-2013.

By paragraphs 11, 17, 38, 46, 50, 55, 57, 58, 59 and 60 of the annex to draft resolution A/64/L.64, the

General Assembly would strongly urge all responsible United Nations entities to coordinate their efforts to fight trafficking in persons effectively and to protect the human rights of its victims, including by means of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons and the Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking.

It would develop or strengthen processes for the identification of victims, such as those developed, inter alia, by the UNODC and other organizations, including appropriate and non-discriminatory measures that help to identify victims of trafficking in persons among vulnerable populations.

It would establish the United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund for Victims of Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, to provide humanitarian, legal and financial aid to victims of trafficking in persons through established channels of assistance, such as governmental, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, which shall operate as a subsidiary fund of the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Fund, managed by UNODC, and be administered in accordance with the financial regulations and rules of the United Nations and other relevant provisions, with the advice of a board of trustees composed of five persons with relevant experience in the field of trafficking in persons, who shall be appointed with due regard to equitable geographic distribution by the Secretary-General in consultation with Member States and with the Executive Director of UNODC.

It would make use of the available technical assistance provided to strengthen the criminal justice response to trafficking in persons, including by UNODC; and recognize that capacity-building is a very important component in combating trafficking in persons, and encourage and enhance coordination and coherence within the United Nations system.

It would intensify international, regional and subregional cooperation to combat trafficking in persons, as well as technical assistance for countries of origin, destination and transit, aimed at strengthening their ability to prevent all forms of trafficking in persons.

It would encourage UNODC, other United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, as well as international and regional organizations to continue to assist Member States, upon request, to strengthen policymaking, legislative arrangements, border control and law enforcement cooperation, public awareness campaigns and capacity-building, and to exchange and build upon best practices in assisting victims of trafficking in persons.

It would further encourage United Nations agencies, funds and programmes to continue to improve the coherence and efficiency of technical assistance delivery in the field of trafficking in persons, in accordance with the recommendations of the Open-ended Intergovernmental Working Group of Governmental Experts on Technical Assistance established by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention.

It would urge the Secretary-General to expedite the strengthening of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons under the coordination of UNODC in order to ensure overall organization and coherence in the United Nations system's efforts to respond to trafficking in persons.

It would request the Secretary-General, as a matter of priority, to strengthen the capacity of UNODC to collect information and report biennially, starting in 2012, on patterns and flows of trafficking in persons at the national, regional and international levels in a balanced, reliable and comprehensive manner, in close cooperation and collaboration with Member States, and share best practices and lessons learned from various initiatives and mechanisms.

In line with paragraph 60 of the annex to the draft resolution, it is envisaged that the activities arising from the operative paragraphs will be implemented effective 1 January 2012. Therefore, the adoption of the draft resolution would not entail any additional requirements for the programme budget for the biennium 2010-2011.

With regard to resource requirements for the biennium 2012-2013, it is the intention of the Secretary-General to address the activities and tasks set out in paragraphs 2, 4, 5, 6 and 7 and paragraphs 11, 17, 38, 46, 50, 55, 57, 58, 59 and 60 of the annex to draft resolution A/64/L.64 in consultation with programme managers to determine the necessary programmatic changes and resource requirements needed for their implementation. Accordingly, should the General Assembly adopt the draft resolution, details on the programmatic changes and resource requirements for the biennium 2012-2013 would be

provided by the Secretary-General to the Assembly at the main part of its sixty-sixth session in the context of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2012-2013.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/64/L.64, entitled "United Nations Global Plan of Action against Trafficking in Persons", as orally corrected.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/64/L.64, as orally corrected?

Draft resolution A/64/L.64, as orally corrected, was adopted (resolution 64/293).

The Acting President: I shall now read out a statement on behalf of His Excellency Mr. Ali Treki, President of the General Assembly, on the adoption of resolution 64/293, entitled "United Nations Global Plan of Action against Trafficking in Persons".

"I welcome the consensus adoption of the resolution entitled 'United Nations Global Plan of Action against Human Trafficking'.

"I would like to thank the co-facilitators, His Excellency Mr. Moraes Cabral, Permanent Representative of Portugal, and His Excellency Mr. Pedro Monteiro Lima, Permanent Representative of Cape Verde, for facilitating this process. Let me also thank Mr. Antonio Maria Costa and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime for their important support.

"I congratulate all members for their efforts and dedication on this matter, which is also a reaffirmation of their commitment to the promotion and protection of human rights.

"Sixty years ago, the General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It proclaims that all human beings are born free, that no one shall be held in slavery or servitude and that slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms. Yet today millions of people, the majority of them children and women, are victims of a modern form of slavery called human trafficking.

"The collective commitment to fight this menace has led to the adoption of this Plan of Action, which will enforce and strengthen effective and comprehensive measures, including cooperation at all levels, to prevent and combat trafficking in persons, protect its victims and prosecute its perpetrators.

"All nations must now work together to implement this resolution and the Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons."

Mr. Moraes Cabral (Portugal): As a co-facilitator of this process, allow me to express my profound gratitude to all delegations for their active participation, in a spirit of constructiveness and cooperation, in the consultations on the Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons. The Plan of Action was a common effort in which many delegations from different regions played a very important role. Unfortunately, human trafficking is a growing phenomenon. The international community as a whole has a responsibility to work as closely and efficiently as possible to fight this terrible scourge. There is an international obligation to act. That is the aim of, and reason for, the Plan of Action that we have just adopted.

I would like to pay tribute to Mr. Antonio Maria Costa, who is sitting here next to me and whose mandate as Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) will end in a few days. The Plan of Action would also not have been possible without his outstanding support and the hard work of his office in New York. In that context, I would like specifically to mention Ms. Simone Monasebian and Mr. Shashi Kara for all their unremitting work and support.

I am very grateful for Mr. Antonio Maria Costa's commitment to the fight against trafficking in persons and for his vocal support of our work as facilitators. Consequently, I regret that he has been prevented from formally addressing the Assembly formally today for largely artificial and procedural reasons.

Allow me also to say a word of thanks to all those on the teams from the missions of Cape Verde and Portugal who helped to steer our course and made outstanding contributions to our work, often on a daily basis and for many hours each day.

This Global Plan of Action is the result of far-reaching consultations and negotiations and translates the will of the General Assembly. The Plan of Action promotes the universal ratification of the Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its Trafficking Protocol. It also reinforces the

implementation of existing instruments and helps Member States to strengthen their national and regional commitments to prevent and combat trafficking in persons. It calls for better coordination among international organizations, States and other stakeholders, as well as for raising awareness of trafficking in persons, especially on the part of civil society.

The structure of the Plan closely follows the structure and main pillars of the Palermo Protocol, specifically to prevent and combat trafficking, to protect and assist victims and to promote cooperation and coordination. In each section of the Plan, we have managed to identify specific commitments to address trafficking in persons that are consistent with previously agreed legal instruments. I would reiterate that the Plan does not duplicate, replace or divert attention from existing legal instruments, and surely does not undermine the relevance and importance of legally binding international treaties. On the contrary, I believe that it will reinforce such documents and promote their universal ratification and effective implementation. Several paragraphs in each section of this document contain clear references to those crucial legal instruments and to the concrete actions foreseen by them to fight trafficking in persons.

But beyond the law enforcement perspective, the Plan of Action also includes other dimensions that are central to our work here in the General Assembly. In our view, these dimensions certainly constitute an added value to the efforts of the international community against trafficking in persons. It introduces a human rights perspective as well as a social development perspective, both of which are crucial in our efforts in the fight against trafficking.

Following that logic, the Plan of Action contains several references to human rights instruments and bodies and to the work of special rapporteurs, which is highlighted throughout the text. The Plan also contains a victim-oriented approach, because victim protection should be another central element of our anti-trafficking efforts at the national, regional and international levels. In that regard, the Plan of Action has a very concrete outcome for victims. It establishes a trust fund for victims of trafficking in persons.

The second concrete outcome that I would underline is the global report on trafficking patterns and flows, best practices and lessons learned from regional initiatives and mechanisms that will be produced by UNODC starting in 2012. That global report, like the one produced in 2009 with data and information on trafficking in persons, will certainly help us to calibrate our action.

Another element that we especially value is the call for better coordination of efforts and for the mainstreaming of the issue of trafficking in persons into policies and programmes addressing, within the United Nations system, economic development, human rights, the rule of law, good governance, natural disaster issues and post-conflict reconstruction.

Last but not least, the Plan encourages and underlines the importance of regional efforts and the exchange of good practices. Much has been done by numerous Member States, both nationally and in regional frameworks. Those experiences and the sharing of best practices will certainly be very valuable for many other Member States.

Let me conclude by saying that being a facilitator of this process was sometimes very difficult but also very personally rewarding, especially when we managed to bridge the gaps between delegations and to create common and cross-regional ground on such an important issue.

Mr. Lima (Cape Verde) (*spoke in French*): Today is a great day for the innumerable victims of trafficking in persons and for the United Nations. That is so thanks to the adoption by consensus of the Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons, which is not only a fundamental text on the legal level that we present to the world, but more importantly is a reference document and a document of hope for all victims and persons who are threatened or targeted by the abominable practice that makes human beings a unit of consumption and submissive spoils of war who are at the mercy of the basest instincts and the most heinous kind of bargaining.

With the Plan of Action, we give fresh hope to all those throughout the world who are being hurt by a practice that, far from disappearing from one era to another, in times of peace or of war re-emerges as a hydra to extend its ravages into every region of the world, sparing no man, woman or child. When I think of the children — and especially children — condemned to labour that they are too weak for and which ruins their health to slake the thirst for easy profit for traffickers, or who are used for sexual ends

by depraved persons or pedophiles — when I think of these young victims, I am grateful that I have contributed, as a co-facilitator, to originating this Plan of Action, which I am sure will make its mark in the annals of the United Nations.

But in order to do that we will need even more commitment from all stakeholders — States, Governments, interested organizations at all levels, governmental and non-governmental alike, private organizations, civil society groups and people of goodwill throughout the world. The danger is not only real; it is increasingly palpable everywhere. Its impact on the lives of communities and individuals is unquestionable, and the consequences for our societies are incalculable.

It is estimated that 4 million women and girls are bought and sold into forced marriages, prostitution or slavery throughout the world, and around 1 million children enter the sex trade every year. Some child exploitation practices are so customary that they go unnoticed, attracting only fleeting disapproval. That system is perpetuated and silence is generalized, while everyone in good faith calls for condemnation of the most visible practices of a system in which profit, poverty and turpitude are intertwined and the lives of children, who die in silence from mistreatment, constitute but a long litany of suffering.

In his courageous and revealing report of February 2009, Mr. Antonio Maria Costa, Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), explained that the report

> "increases our partial understanding of the forces at play in modern slave markets. Yet internationally standardized data are still not available, a limitation that hampers the sharing of information between and among states, and with the UNODC. Aggregated statistics cannot be put together, neither at geographic nor thematic levels.
>
> "As a consequence, we still lack a global understanding of the subject, and of how its components interact to make the whole.
>
> "We should be, but we are not, able to segment today's slave markets into their components (demand, supply, trafficking, and related prices). We must, but cannot, catalogue (for lack of data) the different types of slavery: exploitation through child-begging in Europe is different from what goes on in a brothel, or on a street corner in Australia. Preventive measures must also be adapted to take into account that an Asian father sells his under-age daughter under circumstances different from what forces an African teenager into a rag-tag army of killers, or what pushes an illegal immigrant into a sweat shop in the Americas. Measures to rescue victims and punish criminals must vary accordingly." (*Global Report on Trafficking in Persons, Executive Summary*)

I would like to pay glowing tribute to Mr. Antonio Maria Costa for his unfailing self-sacrifice to a cause that he has always and everywhere defended. I also wish to express the warmest thanks of my Government for his well-deserving, tireless and inspired actions at the head of UNODC and for the contributions of his office in New York, without which it would have been difficult for us to achieve this result. For all their efforts, I would also like to thank Ms. Monasebian and Mr. Shashi Kara.

The work of UNODC should inspire us in the effort to condemn trafficking and to highlight the turpitude of civilized societies. That should be the purpose of the Plan of Action. Contributing towards improving understanding of this heinous form of trafficking will make it possible for States to be more active and effective in their efforts against traffickers by virtue of being better informed, equipped and determined to act to prevent trafficking, protect victims and prosecute traffickers.

The Plan of Action should also make it possible to expand cooperation between Member States and regional and subregional organizations, while increasing the efficiency of the efforts of all parties involved. Trafficking in persons is a global phenomenon. As such, stakeholders should devote all the resources available in order to eradicate it.

I should also like to commend our experts' ability to listen and to undertake dialogue. They have done genuinely impressive work to arrive at a consensus text. What was unclear became acceptable to everyone. What was rejected was ultimately taken into account. Often, misunderstanding and mistrust were set aside so that the goodwill of all could prevail. Understanding prevailed in order to make resolute progress on behalf of victims and of the future. We should now move beyond words and transform today's resolution and

Plan of Action into an assurance of survival for the victims of trafficking, a commitment against impunity for all traffickers and a guarantee of a normal and, if possible, happy life for all of the children on Earth, who are our children.

Ms. Gendi (Egypt): On behalf of Egypt, in its capacity as Chair of the African Group, I have the pleasure to deliver this statement on behalf of the 53 members of the Group of African States of the United Nations following the adoption of the resolution entitled "United Nations Global Plan of Action against Trafficking in Persons", contained in document A/64/L.64, dated 29 July 2010.

The African Group takes pride today in adopting the Global Plan of Action against Trafficking in Persons, which the Group considers as a milestone on the road to ending victimization, prosecuting perpetrators, preventing and protecting all people from falling into the sinful hands of organized crime and compensating victims and supporting national efforts and relevant organizations in their work to that end.

We take pride in the fact that, for the first time in history, we have a universally approved mechanism for coordinating all our efforts nationally, regionally and internationally. The Global Plan of Action against Trafficking will act not only as a coordinating mechanism for Member States, but also as a strategic framework for the international community to work coherently towards preventing and fighting trafficking in persons.

One of its main goals is to accelerate progress in the implementation of existing international instruments — including the most important among them, namely, the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, which supplements the Palermo Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, which was adopted in 2000 — as well as to fill all the gaps existing among all instruments, plans and strategies, whether at the national, regional or international levels, in a unified, coherent, comprehensive and coordinated manner that does not duplicate work but, rather, consolidates and complements existing efforts to fight national and international trafficking in persons.

The Global Plan of Action that we have adopted today has been born strong. Member States have decided to come together, with the help of international community, to establish the new United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund for Victims of Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children. We hope that it will become operational as soon as possible, for the benefit of victims of trafficking.

The Global Plan of Action is not an exclusive instrument of Member States and the United Nations system. It belongs to all and should be fully and effectively implemented by all players in the area of trafficking in persons, even those who were not very visible on the global scene a decade ago. International organizations, civil society and the private sector have a great role to play in that regard. The Global Plan of Action can only harmonize and coordinate the roles of all those important players. It can set out a number of forward-looking actions that are essential to combating human trafficking — with associated and clearly defined targets and achievement indicators that can allow us as Member States and the international community to periodically review, assess and appraise progress towards agreed policy goals and to direct national policy towards high-impact response measures.

The new United Nations Global Plan of Action comprehensively takes into consideration the different capabilities and needs of developing and developed States, whether they are supply, transit or destination countries. In detailing the efforts to be undertaken by Member States, it takes into consideration the vital importance of international cooperation, technical assistance and capacity building. The United Nations Global Plan of Action has also identified the role of different players in raising awareness, gathering information and providing proper education that will help the general public to assist in efforts to combat trafficking in persons at all levels.

This has been a long road filled with obstacles and challenges, but one that has led to enormous achievements. That was the road that African leaders walked with determination from Sharm el-Sheikh, where they adopted a decision, during the African summit held in June and July 2008, to work together towards the adoption of a United Nations Global Plan of Action against Trafficking in Persons. A year later, also at Sharm el-Sheikh, the leaders of the Non-Aligned Movement also supported that effort. That road has led to New York, where we are today witnessing a milestone in the fight against trafficking in persons, namely, the adoption in the General Assembly of the

United Nations Global Plan of Action against Trafficking in Persons.

Finally, we owe a debt of thanks to you personally, Mr. Vice-President, and to the President of the Assembly and his representatives for the leadership in making the fight against trafficking in persons one of the presidency's priority issues. We are also grateful to the two facilitators of the Global Plan of Action — Ambassador Antonio Pedro Monteiro Lima, Permanent Representative of Cape Verde, and Ambassador José Filipe Moraes Cabral, Permanent Representative of Portugal — and to their very active teams for the endless hours they dedicated to making our dream come true and to pushing us to meet our responsibilities in finalizing the excellent document before us.

We also owe a debt of thanks to the Secretary-General and the Secretariat, particularly the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), for the amazing work they are continuously doing to assist Member States in their fight against trafficking and for the support to the whole process of adopting a Global Plan of Action by consensus.

We cannot forget the visionary work of Mr. Antonio Maria Costa, head of UNODC, who will be leaving us shortly, and his great achievements in the fight against trafficking in persons. The African Group also welcomes the appointment of the new head of UNODC. We will be ready to work with him in our common fight against organized crime, particularly trafficking in persons.

Ms. De Geest (Belgium): Thank you, Mr. Vice-President, for giving me the floor to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU). The European Union would like to thank the co-facilitators for presenting the text of the Global Plan of Action. The EU acknowledges the co-facilitators' hard and careful work on this issue over the past months, and is very appreciative of all their efforts.

Human trafficking is a topic that is a major political priority for the EU. The EU remains strongly committed to the fight again this hideous crime, which is an affront to human dignity and which constitutes a gross violation of the human rights of victims, particularly of women and children.

The EU is strongly convinced that, in this fight, the primacy of the existing legal instruments, namely, the Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime and the protocols thereto, in particular the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, is beyond doubt, as they form the pillars for international cooperation in this area.

The fear of the EU during this process was that the adoption of this non-binding document could serve as a disincentive for Member States to ratify and implement the existing instruments, which are legally binding. It is clear that this Plan of Action cannot replace the Convention and the Trafficking Protocol. This is the standing position of the EU.

The EU therefore urges Member States that have not yet done so to ratify or accede to those instruments and to implement them fully and effectively. Unfortunately, this call could not be expressed as strongly as we had wished. The EU negotiated in good faith, and with a constructive and principled approach, throughout the consultation process. Today, we joined the consensus on the Plan of Action.

However, we want to emphasize once more that the implementation of this Plan should not lead, now or in the future, to a parallel process that undermines the process currently ongoing in Vienna. The EU insists that any risk of duplicative reporting obligations or, all the more so, of double legal standards should be very carefully avoided. To that end, we reaffirm and fully support the primary institutional and legal role played by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention. Other partners found it difficult to understand and accommodate these fundamental concerns, which we regret.

The EU sees the merit of the global report on trafficking in persons, patterns and flows. At the same time, the EU understands that resources for this report should be found through re-allocation.

The EU considers that the human rights dimension is crucial in the fight against trafficking. Given its priority, the EU welcomes references in the text to the rights of victims and victim assistance and protection, including the provision of a wide range of services for victims. The EU thinks that civil society plays a crucial role in providing services to victims, and therefore appreciates that this is recognized in the text.

The EU also welcomes the support for the role and mandates of the relevant Special Rapporteurs. The EU also recognizes the important role and the work done by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in the field of human trafficking.

In conclusion, the EU hopes that all Member States will renew their efforts to prevent and combat human trafficking and that they will tackle it forcefully wherever it occurs.

Mr. Barton (United States of America): Our thanks go to the Ambassadors of Cape Verde and Portugal and to the many negotiators who were so helpful in this process. Special thanks go to Executive Director Costa as well for his fine work over the years.

The United States is deeply committed to combating trafficking in persons. With the adoption of the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, in 2000, the international community defined trafficking in persons for the first time at the international level and agreed to prevent and combat it, as well as to protect and assist its victims. In doing so, it gave a new name to an old crime. Trafficking in persons has since been used as an umbrella term for all activities involved in obtaining or holding someone in compelled service — whether sex trafficking, involuntary servitude, slavery, debt bondage or forced labour.

The United States is proud to join with the 116 countries that enacted legislation prohibiting all forms of trafficking and is eager to work collaboratively to address the many systemic factors — from supply-chain sourcing and Government procurement to immigration and shelter policies — that may contribute to trafficking in persons. As we look to new ways to engage and tackle this crime, we maintain the primacy of the Protocol and its mandate to bring traffickers to justice while protecting victims.

The United States maintains its position that the focus of international anti-trafficking in persons efforts should be on the universal ratification and implementation of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its supplementary Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, not on the establishment of a new mechanism in New York. The Trafficking Protocol serves as the cornerstone for effective action in ending human trafficking. Ultimately, the political will of Governments is vitally important in the fight against trafficking in persons.

Despite our concerns as to the necessity of the Global Plan of Action, we have collaborated in good faith to ensure that this document is as strong as possible, while not creating any parallel New York process and not overriding the Palermo treaties or the mandate of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime in Vienna. We think that the final text of the document reflects this for the most part.

We appreciate the efforts of the facilitators and the main supporters of the Global Plan of Action in addressing our concerns. With regard to paragraph 6 of the resolution, it is the view of the United States that this should be limited to an item on the agenda of the General Assembly, under which Member States would self-report on their efforts to implement the Global Plan of Action. The United States will not object to the current language of paragraph 6. However, we will not support efforts in the future to turn the Global Plan of Action, or any mechanism that may be established to review its implementation, into a formal ongoing mechanism in New York that will divert resources from technical assistance and other activities related to the Palermo Protocol.

Human trafficking is a threat to national security, public health and democracy. Real action is needed on the ground to combat trafficking, and it is our hope that the resolution and the annexed Global Plan of Action will lead to universal ratification and implementation of the Protocol.

In view of the critical importance of ending human trafficking, we were pleased to join consensus on this resolution and the annexed Global Plan of Action.

Mr. Escalona Ojeda (the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, the delegation of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela wishes to express its gratitude to the delegations of Portugal and Cape Verde for their tireless efforts and the professionalism, transparency and diplomatic skill they exhibited in their roles as facilitators throughout the process of negotiating the Global Plan of Action against Trafficking in Persons.

The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela believes that trafficking in persons is a grave violation of human rights and a transgression of human dignity. It is our firm conviction that if we are to effectively prevent, control and fight this terrible scourge, we must, among other things, strengthen our States' commitments to broadening and improving the programmes and initiatives which aim at fighting and reducing poverty, inequity and social exclusion, which are the root causes of the increased vulnerability of women, boys and girls, in particular, who fall victim to criminal traffickers, who often belong to organized criminal groups operating nationally and transnationally.

My country has stressed the importance of fighting poverty and social injustice in a variety of international fora, and we have created the most extensive national network of social programmes ever seen in our history, with the aim of meeting the social needs of all our citizens, especially the poor and most vulnerable. In our country, we have strong and wide-ranging legislation and national action plans to combat trafficking. Remaining faithful to the Bolivarian ideal, we are working towards the realization of social justice.

Within this conceptual framework, Venezuelan legislation — such as the Organic Law on the Right of Women to a Life Free from Violence — strictly prohibits different forms of trafficking in persons. Among the efforts of the Bolivarian Government to strengthen the national legal framework in this area, the Ministry of People's Power for Interior and Justice is currently developing a national action plan to prevent, suppress and punish the crime of trafficking in persons, prostitution and pornography. National and international bodies, including UNICEF, are involved in this effort.

Efforts to fight this scourge must be made on a global scale. Broad-based international cooperation at all levels is critical to effectively counteracting the threats posed by trafficking in persons and other modern-day forms of slavery. In this context, we believe firmly that the struggle against this crime is a joint responsibility that is shared by countries of origin, transit and destination. However, we believe that the regions representing the principle markets for trafficked persons have the primary responsibility for finding a solution, since there would be no supply without demand. Furthermore, those who organize the demand are, in general, linked through transnational networks to those who organize the supply, while the victims are usually the poor of the world, from both the South and the North.

The role of multilateralism, and in particular the role of the United Nations, must therefore be strengthened in the monitoring and evaluation of trafficking in persons, which must always be based on the statistics and information provided by Member States. As has already been pointed out, it is difficult to obtain statistics in this area, given the nature of these criminal acts. My delegation therefore takes this opportunity to reiterate its firm rejection of the selective, unilateral evaluations carried out by certain countries, motivated by purely political ends.

In conclusion, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela supports the adoption and implementation of the Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons, which will enable us to ensure the full and effective application of all existing legal instruments in this area, as well as to promote coordination and cooperation among Member States, mechanisms and bodies established under the treaties endorsed by States and other legal instruments established in the framework of the United Nations system.

Mr. Benítez Versón (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): Cuba welcomes the adoption by the General Assembly of the United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons. This instrument is necessary, especially given the increase in trafficking in persons around the world.

We believe that strengthening international cooperation is of vital importance to fighting this scourge, and the Plan of Action will help towards that end, based on full respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States. Cuba believes that the consultative process has yielded a balanced Plan of Action, which includes provisions for concrete action and an important political call to action by the General Assembly in the fight against trafficking in persons.

We would have preferred the Plan to include explicit references to the need to take joint action, without the imposition of unilateral evaluations or requirements on States, which Cuba strongly rejects. Nonetheless, it is clear that any unilateral, selective and politically motivated evaluation with respect to trafficking in persons would go entirely against the Global Plan of Action that we have adopted today. We therefore hope that States that continue such

unacceptable practices will discontinue them immediately.

We welcome the provisions of the Plan of Action pertaining to the drafting of balanced, reliable and comprehensive reports on trafficking in persons at the national, regional and international levels. Such reports should strengthen multilateralism as the sole way of combating all types of transnational crime.

In the case of Cuba — which is not categorized as a country of origin, transit or destination of this scourge — the legislation and measures that we have adopted in this area make us one of the countries with the most advanced norms and mechanisms to prevent and combat trafficking in persons.

We are especially grateful to the facilitators of this process — Ambassadors Antonio Pedro Monteiro Lima of Cape Verde and José Filipe Moraes Cabral of Portugal — for their efforts to strike a balance among all the parties.

I should like to conclude by reiterating Cuba's unwavering commitment to continue to resolutely combat trafficking in persons in all its aspects and to strengthen our concrete cooperation links with the international community and the United Nations in our joint efforts to prevent and eradicate trafficking in persons throughout the world.

Ms. Alkhalifa (Bahrain) (*spoke in Arabic*): The delegation of Bahrain welcomes the consensus adoption of the United Nations Global Plan of Action against Trafficking in Persons.

On behalf of my country, I am pleased to express our sincere gratitude to the facilitators, the Permanent Representatives of Cape Verde and Portugal, to whom the President assigned the difficult task of finding common ground among all parties concerned in reaching consensus agreement on the Plan in spite of all the complexities and points of view on this issue. My delegation believes that the co-facilitators succeeded in that very difficult undertaking, for which we are particularly grateful. We also thank all delegations that participated so patiently in the negotiations in a genuine desire to agree on the fundamental principles, which led them to accept certain compromises.

The Kingdom of Bahrain made significant efforts to be part of this process, in line with our country's political orientation and as part of a reform process that encompasses all areas of life, especially human rights, labour laws and the rights of women. We have done so based on our belief that, regardless of the form it takes, trafficking in persons should be addressed by the entire international community under the leadership of the United Nations and with a common voice and purpose.

Member States now have the responsibility to implement the Plan of Action in close cooperation in order to achieve the desired results. The Kingdom of Bahrain will attach the greatest priority and attention to the Plan and make it part of our legislation.

Mr. Ahmed (Bangladesh): My delegation would like to thank the two facilitators for the manner in which they guided the negotiations that culminated in today's consensus adoption of the Global Plan of Action against Trafficking in Persons.

As a member of the informal Group of Friends United against Human Trafficking, we express our satisfaction with the entire exercise. We also wish to thank all delegations, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and others that took an active part in the long negotiations over the past few months. Now that we have a Global Plan of Action, the onus is on us, the Member States, to implement it.

As the issue of trafficking in persons is mostly transboundary in nature, we hope that all Member States will complement each other in carrying out the difficult task of curbing and eradicating this trade.

Mr. Cabactulan (Philippines): Discussions on the subject of the Global Plan of Action against Trafficking in Persons have taken place for many years. They could very well have gone on for many years, but President Treki's determination to conclude the Plan of Action under his watch took the debate to another level. It is for that reason that my delegation would like to pay special tribute to him for his courage and vision in seeing to it that the sixty-fourth session achieved very concrete and meaningful results, such as the Global Plan of Action.

In the same vein, my delegation highly commends the facilitators — His Excellency Mr. José Filipe Moraes Cabral of Portugal and His Excellency Mr. Antonio Pedro Monteiro Lima of Cape Verde — as well as their staff, who displayed competence, transparency, judiciousness and, may I say, extreme patience during the consultations. Let me also thank Mr. Antonio Maria Costa and the United Nations

Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) for their very important role in the formulation of the Plan.

Addressing today's slavery is important to us all. UNODC and the many United Nations supporting agencies in the areas of economics, crime and human rights with the expertise in the implementation of existing instruments have told us that, as the international community, we are wanting. We have been reminded that there are many unaccounted for, unseen and unattended victims, and that there will be many more. We have also been told that very prosperous and resourceful traffickers thrive due to the gaps in the international community's coordination.

It is for those reasons that the Global Plan of Action against Trafficking in Persons is of the utmost relevance and importance. We should henceforth take every opportunity to report, assist, inform and share. We should publicly and loudly demonstrate that, acting as one, the international community intends to bring to light the many faces of this hidden crime and the victims it produces.

Let me conclude by expressing my delegation's great pleasure for the consensus adoption of resolution 64/293.

Mr. Torres (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): First of all, allow me to acknowledge the dedicated and patient efforts of the Permanent Representatives of Cape Verde and Portugal as facilitators of this process.

My country attaches special priority to crucial national and international efforts to prevent and combat the pernicious trafficking in persons, protect and help its victims, and prosecute and bring to justice the perpetrators of this crime. In that regard, Colombia has developed a significant legal framework and comprehensive public policies that are being implemented in a coordinated way by various State institutions. My country also participates in initiatives to provide and generate ever-increasing international cooperation to combat trafficking in persons.

Colombia would like to take this opportunity to make some comments on the adoption of resolution 64/293 and its annex on the United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons.

First, my delegation would like to reiterate that, for Colombia, the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, form the basic pillar of the international community's fight against organized crime and the trafficking persons.

The Palermo Convention and its Protocol on trafficking in persons establish a concrete and effective legal framework to prevent, investigate and punish all manifestations of organized crime, including trafficking in persons, and to strengthen international cooperation in that regard and provide proper protection for the victims. The effective implementation of these instruments has been and continues to be indispensable in the efficient, consistent and coordinated fight against trafficking in persons in the national and international contexts. Full support and guarantees for compliance with the mandates and work of Conference of the Parties are also indispensable to effectively improving the ability of States to fight transnational organized crime and to promote and monitor the enforcement of the Palermo Convention and its Protocols.

Secondly, my delegation wishes to stress that the consideration of the United Nations Global Plan of Action against Trafficking in Persons was undertaken with the purpose, set forth in resolution 63/194, of ensuring the full and effective implementation of the Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children. In this sense, the main contribution of the Plan of Action is the renewed commitment of Member States to promoting the universal ratification of the Palermo Convention and its trafficking Protocol, and to effectively strengthening and applying these instruments, the role of which was explicitly recognized in the resolution adopted today.

Colombia recognizes the eminently political essence of the Plan of Action. We hope that its spirit and aspirations will contribute to strengthening coordination among the organs of the United Nations system having jurisdiction in the fight against trafficking in persons. We trust that the implementation of the resolution will duly reflect the political will expressed by Member States in the consultations to ensure that the Plan of Action offers complementary support to international efforts within the framework of the Palermo Convention and its trafficking Protocol, including the preservation of and due respect for the work of and the mandate established for the Conference of Parties.

Accordingly, it is essential to ensure that at no time shall the Plan generate the creation of bodies or review or follow-up mechanisms parallel to those that have already been identified and defined by the Conference of the Parties to the Palermo Convention, of which the fifth session will take place in October.

My country recognizes that the efforts of any one State are not enough to prevent trafficking in persons. Action to counter and eradicate this crime calls for firm political commitment, resolute international political cooperation and mutual criminal justice assistance. The protection of victims requires national actions to be strengthened with the support of the international community. We hope that the United Nations, in its work against trafficking in persons, will continue to focus its efforts and resources on supporting Member States in the full implementation of the Palermo Convention and the Protocol on trafficking in persons, and to support those States that have not yet ratified these instruments in adapting their legal frameworks and institutional capacities to join the Convention and the Protocol. The universalization of these binding legal instruments as the indispensable framework for effective international cooperation based on trust, reciprocity and effective cooperation should be our common goal and a priority for all.

Mr. Mohamed (Maldives), Vice-President, took the Chair.

To conclude, allow me to acknowledge the outstanding work of Mr. Antonio Maria Costa, Executive Director of the United National Office on Drugs and Crime. He is here today, and I wish to thank him on behalf of my Government for his cooperation with and support to Colombia throughout the years in which he has held that honourable post.

Mr. Andrade (Brazil): We welcome the adoption by consensus of the Global Plan of Action against Trafficking in Persons, which is a valuable contribution to the efforts of the international community to fight such a heinous crime. We would like to thank all delegations involved in the discussions for their cooperative spirit, which led to a successful outcome of the negotiations. We would especially like to express our gratitude for the facilitators of this process, the Permanent Representatives of Cape Verde and Portugal, and their staff, who very ably led us through such a complex and delicate discussion and contributed decisively to the successful outcome.

Mrs. Rubiales de Chamorro (Nicaragua) (*spoke in Spanish*): The millions of victims of trafficking in persons, that modern form of slavery, today have received fresh hope to counter their suffering. The adoption of the Global Plan of Action against Trafficking in Persons is an historic milestone not only for our Organization, but above all for the lives of the human beings who have fallen prey to the greed and avarice of those who profit from trafficking in human beings.

The need to adopt the Global Plan of Action against Trafficking in Persons is of long date. Under the Nicaraguan presidency of the General Assembly at its sixty-third session, under the leadership of Father Miguel d'Escoto Brockmann, we began to formally discuss the possibility of adopting such a plan of action. At that time, the Plan seemed very controversial and difficult to agree because many delegations did not see the need for a global plan of action. However, a ever-growing group of friendly countries headed by Belarus decided to continue to draw the attention of the international community to the urgent need for the Plan. We thank the President of the General Assembly at its sixty-fourth session for his support and for returning to it with great strength.

Today, the Global Plan of Action has become a reality thanks to the determination of Member States. I wish to especially mention the experts who worked extremely hard to make the Plan a reality. I also wish to thank the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, Mr. Antonio Maria Costa, and his team, especially Ms. Simone Monasebian. I also wish to acknowledge the leadership and dedication of the facilitators, the representatives of Cape Verde and Portugal, Mr. Antonio Pedro Monteiro Lima and Mr. José Felipe Moraes Cabral. We thank them for their excellent work.

The leadership and good sense of our facilitators made the process transparent that took most of the concerns of Member States into account. The role played by the facilitators in this achievement demonstrated that any issue before the United Nations can be discussed in accordance with the principles of equality and mutual respect between States. No matter how large or small the countries we represent may be, it is always possible to reach consensus based on justice and good faith. This achievement is also a clear demonstration that multilateralism does indeed work.

Mr. Christian (Ghana), Vice-President, returned to the Chair.

The result is a balanced document that covers all aspects of the issue. It may not reflect our every aspiration — in our case, for example, we should have liked to further stress the need to eliminate demand as a main cause of trafficking in persons for sexual exploitation — but we are very pleased indeed because we now have an international instrument that provides a broad, strategic framework and will contribute to greater coordination of the collective efforts of States Members, the United Nations system and non-governmental organizations.

Far from contradicting or overlapping with existing legal instruments, the Plan will contribute to facilitating the implementation of international and regional instruments and mechanisms, as well as better cooperation and collaboration among members of the international community that will contribute to preventing this crime; protecting and assisting victims of trafficking, with a focus on human rights, especially for women and children; and to prosecuting perpetrators.

The commitment of the delegation of Nicaragua to the approval of the Plan is a reflection of the commitment of our Government of National Reconciliation and Unity to eradicating this evil worldwide, and especially within our region of Central America.

Mr. Troya (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): The delegation of Ecuador believes that the adoption of the United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons is valuable and timely. The document we have adopted will give hope to many people who have fallen victims to the detestable crime of trafficking in persons. We are sure that the Plan of Action does not counter or weaken such international instruments as the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children. On the contrary, it reinforces and complements those international instruments.

Every year, millions of people fall victim to one of the largest illicit businesses on Earth. Human trafficking fills the pockets of international mafias that profit from the suffering of those who have had to leave their countries for many reasons. My delegation is aware that the problem of uncontrolled migration of human beings cannot be resolved through protocols, conventions or other instruments of this nature. Uncontrolled migration can be countered only when countries of origin offer their own citizens decent living conditions and opportunities that make it unnecessary to leave one's motherland.

The road we have had to take to reach this census has been long and difficult. Therefore, we must recognize and applaud the valuable work of the facilitators, the Ambassadors of Portugal and Cape Verde, and the entire Working Group on Trafficking in Persons, to whom we owe, to a large degree, the success of our work.

My delegation wishes to express our deep satisfaction with the agreement reached and reiterate our firm commitment to working to implement the Plan of Action.

Mrs. Kolontai (Belarus) (*spoke in Russian*): Belarus welcomes the General Assembly's successful consensus adoption of such a meaningful and long-awaited instrument as the United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons. This is an important and symbolic milestone in the development of the international process, in which Belarus became a participant five years ago.

The Plan of Action is a compelling manifestation of the positive, far-reaching changes that Belarus actively sought when it advanced in the United Nations the idea of the need for systemic efforts to improve the coordination and harmonization of multilateral actions against trafficking in persons. We welcome the efforts of the President of the General Assembly, Mr. Ali Treki, and the facilitators of the negotiation process on the Global Plan, the Permanent Representatives of Portugal and Cape Verde to the United Nations, Mr. José Filipe Moraes Cabral and Mr. Antonio Pedro Monteiro Lima, in organizing the negotiation process and ensuring its effectiveness.

We also welcome the efforts of the parties aimed at achieving consensus on resolution 64/293, introduced at today's meeting of the General Assembly. We express particular gratitude to Mr. Antonio Maria Costa who, as the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, was an active advocate of the Global Plan of Action from the outset. He undertook tireless efforts to advance the idea of the need for the Plan and supported the establishment of

the Group of Friends against human trafficking. We thank the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in New York and Ms. Simone Monasebian personally for their invaluable assistance to States during the negotiation process on the Global Plan.

We have come a long way to the point we have reached today, from the initial resolutions laying out the possible coordinated joint actions to the frank and wide-ranging discussions of this problem at the thematic debates in the General Assembly, and from the establishment of the informal Group of Friends that came together to fight against human trafficking to the collective drafting and consensus adoption of the Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons.

We recognize that the Plan is not a cure-all solution to the scourge of trafficking in persons. We understand that it is not ideal. As a compromise document, the Plan cannot reflect the varying and specific natures of the approaches of individual States or groups in addressing the complex problem of eradicating trafficking in persons, but it does reflect the most important thing — the resolve of Member States to see this complex matter through to the end.

We are certain that the Plan can mobilize and harmonize the efforts of the entire international community to prevent and suppress human trafficking and will guide these efforts within a coordinated, balanced and comprehensive framework. We believe that the Global Plan will contribute to further broadening the list of parties to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, and that it can help to universalize these important legal instruments. In adopting the Global Plan of Action today, the General Assembly has sent to the international community a clear, strong signal that the United Nations has the will and ability to put an end to the modern form of slavery that is trafficking in persons, and to do so by acting now and together.

In Belarus, we do not believe that this is an idealistic approach. By acting together, we can prove that this is not the case.

Ms. Khvan (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The delegation of the Russian Federation was pleased to join the consensus on resolution 64/293 on the United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons. Above all, we would like to express our gratitude to the facilitators of the negotiation process, the Permanent Representatives of Portugal and Cape Verde. We are certain that today's adoption was made possible by their persistence and their creativity in seeking balanced language reflecting the interests of all interested States.

Furthermore, we welcome the constructive and responsible approach of all parties to the negotiating process. Clearly, without the political will to seek compromise, the drafting of the Global Plan of Action would hardly have been made possible. It is heartening that, despite the sometimes differing understandings and assessments of the problem, we were still able to pool our efforts against the threat of trafficking in persons. We believe that only a comprehensive and holistic approach will allow us to achieve tangible results against this scourge.

In conclusion, we express the hope that the Global Plan adopted today will become an effective road map for the entire international community to counter trafficking in persons.

The Acting President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 104.

The meeting rose at 4.50 p.m.